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IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY

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THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

# IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY

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MILDRED THRONE

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# IOWA

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## COVER

View of the Demoine House, built in 1854-1855, on the present site of the post-office at First and Walnut streets in Des Moines. Tacitus Hussey, *Beginnings, Reminiscences of Early Des Moines* (Des Moines, Iowa, 1919).

## THE COPPERHEADS OF IOWA: A RE-EXAMINATION

*By Robert Rutland*

Despite the passage of almost a century, a stereotype of the Iowa Copperhead continues to exist. Students of the Civil War cannot fail to be impressed with the "fire in the rear" alluded to by so many historians of that conflict. A study of the problem of loyalty and disaffection during the years 1861-1865 in Iowa offers promise, because the story of the Copperheads — the "Peace Democrats" — of Iowa does not exactly conform with the common conception of the Midwestern Copperhead movement. Iowa Copperheads had, in common with their Midwestern brethren, an aversion to a stronger federal system and an agrarian distrust of the mushrooming industrialism in the East. But whereas the Copperheads of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were able to elect men to Congress, control legislatures, and even threaten to sweep an entire ticket of offices, the Iowa Copperhead was a feeble voice in state politics. Denied a single congressional seat, narrowed to a handful of supporters in the General Assembly, and at times unable to present firm candidates for the governorship, the Copperheads of Iowa reached a wretched political level. Why, then, is the Copperhead significant in Iowa history?

Consider the Iowa setting in 1861. Her inhabitants had come from New England and the South, from the middle Atlantic region, and from the neighboring states. Portions of Iowa were still a part of the raw frontier, and beyond her western boundaries there stretched more than a thousand miles of plains, mountains, and desert. Politically, the majority of this amalgam of people had cast their lot with the newly formed Republican party at the state and national level. Slavery was forbidden within her borders. A historic decision clarifying the status of the Negro in Iowa had been made in 1839, when Democrat Charles Mason sat on the territorial supreme court bench. There was no doubt as to the course Iowa would pursue if the irrepressible conflict became more than a rhetorical phrase.

The touch of Edmund Ruffin's firebrand at Morris Island kindled sparks of resentment and outrage in the remotest western counties of Iowa. The



state raised more regiments than the War Department hoped for and pledged thousands of dollars for the Union cause. Iowa farm products helped feed troops and civilians and also brought in precious gold for foreign exchange. Notwithstanding all these accomplishments and efforts, there was still disaffection in wartime Iowa. Considerable disaffection, in fact, although the evidence indicates that actual treason was a scarce item. Of suspicion and rumors there were plenty, and much hearsay testimony was available, but, despite all the commotion and scores of arrests, there was only a handful of convictions. Significantly, however, the Copperhead label almost turned Iowa into a one-party state and, with few exceptions, wrecked the political future of the chief Iowa Democrats.

One reason for the Copperhead scare was the hysteria that is incidental to any war. Modern Americans have only to recall the herding of citizens of Japanese descent during World War II, or the Iowa incident (repeated in many other states) in 1918 when a minister of German descent at Lowden "was given 48 hours to leave town."<sup>1</sup> This same psychological factor was present in Iowa in the 1860's, demanding absolute unanimity behind the Lincoln administration, the war effort, and (so Democrats claimed) the Republican party. Treason, to many of the most zealous Union supporters, did not lie in levying war against the government, or adhering to the Confederacy, or giving aid and comfort to the South, but simply in being guilty of outspoken criticism of the war policies in the North.

The zealots' memory was singularly short. Little more than a decade earlier, as Whigs, they had joined with Charles Sumner, Horace Greeley, James Russell Lowell, and Theodore Parker in denouncing the Mexican War and the administration which launched it as a crime against humanity. They had not then thought their attitude treasonable. There was Representative Columbus Delano of Ohio, who declared on May 13, 1846, that the Polk administration had promoted an "illegal, unrighteous, and damnable war"<sup>2</sup> — the same Columbus Delano who made a seconding speech for Abraham Lincoln in 1860. And among these "Conscience Whigs" in 1846 had been the editor of the *Iowa City Standard*, who asserted that the Mexican War

. . . was commenced contrary to law, and in violation of the con-

<sup>1</sup> Cedar Rapids *Daily Republican*, Nov. 12, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 29 Cong., 1 Sess. (1845-1846), 815.

stitution, and the treaty of amity which existed between the two Republics. But we will waive the aggression, as Congress sanctioned and legalized the act; at least by implication. But we intend to hold the Administration responsible for every movement, since the vote of supplies. And a fearful responsibility it will be.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1860's, Thomas Claggett, Democratic legislator from Keokuk, did not forget these remarks. He is reported to have published a pamphlet in 1864 calling attention to the critics of '46: *The Difference it Makes with Abolitionists When War is Waged for the Defence of the Honor of Our Flag, and a War for the Abolition of Slavery*.<sup>4</sup> Judge Claggett had forgotten the brevity of the public memory.

Born of a period of extreme emotionalism, the Copperhead scare was soon to become a functional element in Iowa politics. A deliberate and perhaps sincere effort was made to create the impression that treason lurked at every corner. That much is certain. That a political clique found the term "Copperhead" served its masters as a means of destroying the power of their opponents is a matter of record. With Fort Sumter the northern Democrat was given a choice. He could go along with the Lincoln program as a "War Democrat" or oppose the administration as a "Peace Democrat." If choosing the former, "he goes in for the Constitution as it is, the Union as it is, the laws as they are, and for Old Abe for the next four years," an Iowa City editor averred. "That comes so near to being Republicanism itself," he added, that whoever subscribed to that program could be received into the "Republican church."<sup>5</sup> The truth of the editor's remark was apparent. The choice to the Democrat really seemed to be between joining former political enemies — admitting you had been wrong all the time — or standing by old loyalties and principles.<sup>6</sup>

Thus arises the problem which confronts every historian working with the so-called traitorous Northern elements: the variety of uses of the word

<sup>3</sup> Iowa City Standard, Nov. 18, 1846.

<sup>4</sup> The pamphlet is mentioned in the Des Moines Iowa State Register, Aug. 17, 1864.

<sup>5</sup> Iowa City Republican, Jan. 30, 1861.

<sup>6</sup> The dilemma facing the Democrats was posed by a Republican editor in Dubuque. If the Democrats did not support the administration, they would be disloyal, and if they intended to support the administration then "what more will all this accomplish than the Republican Party . . . [and] what good will there be in a Union Democratic Ticket?" Dubuque Weekly Times, Aug. 15, 1861.

"Copperhead." Wood Gray found that Copperhead had "been used as a general term of opprobrium long before the war,"<sup>7</sup> and its use as a political label in Pennsylvania politics of the 1840's had been proved.<sup>8</sup> The late James G. Randall surmised that "Like other labels of scorn and hate, the word came to be so inexactly used as to lose all genuine meaning and to become a mere trick of name-calling." Whether it came from the taunts of opponents, or from the fact that the old hard-money Democrats wore the copper one-cent pieces as breastpins, the name was soon used as a smear word and admirably served its purpose. "So far as the word had a justifiable, specific significance it may be said to have denoted secret, subversive, pro-Confederate, or treasonable groups at the North," Randall stated. Certain persons fell into this category and "it was understandable to stigmatize them with this word of burning scorn. Then came the next step: the label came to have such crushing force as a whiplash of reproach that it offered a cheap advantage to those who would use it irresponsibly to smirch political opponents."<sup>9</sup> Some Iowa Copperheads even tried to embrace the name as a label, concocted by "Black Republicans," which would backfire. "We like it much," wrote the editor of the *Iowa City State Press*; the Copperhead was a fearless, brave, and independent snake that could not be trampled on, for "when once aroused, its bite is awful."<sup>10</sup>

To pretend that the label was pleasing was to other Democratic editors a whistling in the dark. "No matter show [sic] loyal [t]o the Government or devoted to the Union a man may have been heretofore, if he is now a Democrat, he is a traitor and a knave," the *Washington Democrat* declared.<sup>11</sup> As the war dragged on, Iowans charged with Copperheadism deeply resented the term, and in that day when most issues were construed as either black or white (gray was a rebel color) they wanted a clear-cut definition of the word. Until early in 1863, Iowa newspapers favoring the Lincoln administration spoke of the "Peace Democrats" and of other critics of the war policies as "seceshes," "disunionists," "rattlesnakes," or simply as traitors. By 1863, then, the Copperhead became the symbol in Iowa of all

<sup>7</sup> Wood Gray, *The Hidden Civil War* (New York, 1942), 141.

<sup>8</sup> Julian P. Boyd, "Copperheads," in *Dictionary of American History*, 2:58.

<sup>9</sup> James G. Randall, *Lincoln the President* (3 vols., New York, 1945-1952), 3:187.

<sup>10</sup> *Iowa City State Press*, Apr. 25, 1863.

<sup>11</sup> *Washington Democrat*, Aug. 12, 1862.



the contempt that could be mustered against the anti-war faction that was "firing on the rear" — the "Peace Democrats." "The Democrats of Greene county are not, as a general thing, Copperheads," the state's leading Republican newspaper, the Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, declared. Although the Greene County Democrats were loyal, the paper continued, that "is more than we can say of the Democrats in many other localities."<sup>12</sup> The editor of a Sioux City Democratic newspaper demanded from his party's state convention a resolution calling for vigorous support of the war. He was promptly accused, by Des Moines's voice of Republicanism, of merely using a dishonest Copperhead subterfuge. Editor S. P. Yeomans indignantly counterattacked the *State Register*:

Now this term "Copperhead" seems to have a very broad and undefined signification, and our cotemporary [sic] would oblige us by defining his meaning. . . . Is the man a Copperhead who shoulders his musket and fights for the Union, but fails to see the wisdom of the Republican policy . . . does it require that a man surrender blindly the right of private opinion, and acquiesce in every act of the party in power, however flagrantly wrong, in order not to be a Copperhead?<sup>13</sup>

The *State Register* answered that those men who talked of "peace through compromise, and Restoration through Conciliation," were undoubtedly Copperheads.

It was natural that the tempo of this name-calling should reach a kind of peak in 1863, for it was an election year. Although Republican gubernatorial candidate William M. Stone was easily elected, the wide margin of his victory was not foreseen during the campaign. A few weeks before the election the "Iowa Items" column of the *State Register* had 47 entries in one issue; of these, 15 made a direct reference to Copperheads, three more were indirect. Another issue had 27 items in the column, with 11 direct allusions to "Iowa rebels" or Copperheads. Some of the Democrats thus labeled fought back through the courts. B. N. Kinyon of Des Moines brought suit against the Des Moines *Register* "for having used the word 'Copperhead' in connection with his name," and asked \$10,000 in damages. John C. Turk brought a criminal prosecution suit against the *Register* on the same grounds, and before the month ended a third action was brought

<sup>12</sup> Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, May 20, 1863.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, May 27, 1863.

on a similar charge.<sup>14</sup> "Don't spare us, Cops!" the *Register* rejoined with defiance. "It will give us great pleasure to respond to all your calls for satisfaction." In August, 1863, the charges were thrown out of court by a grand jury. Seemingly vindicated, the *Register* was editorially exuberant. "The freedom of the press has been sustained; and as dirty a set of sorry Copperheads as ever disgraced a white settlement in a free country, have been rebuked and humiliated."<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, the *Register* denied the charge that its policy was to designate all Democrats as Copperheads. Whoever makes that charge, said the *Register*, "is both an ass and a falsifier." There was a distinct difference. "What is a Copperhead? He is not a Democrat, but a miserable thief who has stolen the Democratic name as a covering for his villainies. He is a slimy reptile whose affinities are with the original Serpent in the Garden."<sup>16</sup>

Even in those days of intense personal journalism, punctuated as it was with the occasional horse-whipping of an editor, the attack on the Copperheads in Iowa was not generated spontaneously out of the disasters at Bull Run or the victory at Fort Donelson. From the first days of the war, a determined "Peace Democrat" opposition had persistently demanded "the Constitution as it is, the Union as it was!" Able men led this opposition, although there was a definite attempt made at the time to discount their abilities by casting aspersions on their loyalty and sometimes their mentality. These Copperheads, as they came to be called, came from the strict-constructionist wing of the Democratic party. By a strange trick of fate the conservative status quo Democrats became the radicals of the Civil War. They believed, and diary notes attest their sincerity, that a house divided was preferable to a war between brothers. In Lincoln's policies they saw an end to constitutional government, an end to state sovereignty, and the supreme triumph of the Republican party. These men deserve further study.

Foremost among the Iowa Copperheads, but by no means the accepted leader of the Peace Democrats, was Dennis A. Mahony. This fiery Irish immigrant edited the Dubuque *Herald*, sat in the General Assembly, and was a bullwhip for the Democratic party in Iowa. He detested New England industrialism, favored white supremacy, and flirted with the idea of a commercial alliance between the upper Mississippi states and the South

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, May 27, July 8, 1863.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1863.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, June 17, 1863.

when the war ended, as he predicted, in a Northern failure to subjugate the Confederacy. "To talk of peace is treason; to petition Congress for the restoration of peace is treason," he charged. "In a word it is treason to be a Patriot, and patriotic to be a Traitor."<sup>17</sup> Egged on by Mahony's continued attacks on the war policy, federal officials finally ordered his arrest. With the habeas corpus suspended, he was whisked from his home in Dubuque in August, 1862, and taken to the Old Capitol prison in Washington, D. C. Mahony was never formally charged with any crime and was finally released after taking a loyalty oath of allegiance on November 11.<sup>18</sup>

Another central figure in Iowa Copperhead circles was Henry Clay Dean. So many fanciful stories have come down to us about Dean that it is difficult to discern his true character. Perhaps he was as untidy as his political opponents alleged when they spoke of him as "Dirty-Shirt Dean." Whatever his personal habits may have been, he was regarded as a stirring orator with a lashing tongue. A former Whig, Dean had served as chaplain to the United States Senate during part of Pierce's administration, and after his return to Iowa had staunchly defended the Democratic party. Like Mahony, Dean was arrested on a suspicion of treason, but after a short internment in St. Louis he was released without a trial. The arrest only spurred Dean to more accusations of the Lincoln administration as an autocratic despotism. For all his eccentricities, real or imagined, Dean had a first-rate mind as his book — *Crimes of the Civil War, or The Curse of the Funding System* — later proved. Printed in the postwar period, it was among the first harbingers of the Greenback movement.<sup>19</sup>

Others in the front ranks of the Copperheads, although they would not have used the name themselves, were LeGrand Byington, Judge Charles Mason, and George W. Jones. Byington had been a state legislator and editor in Ohio, but he moved to Iowa in 1849 where he soon became a moderately wealthy landowner. In 1860 Byington campaigned for Stephen A. Douglas and during the wartime campaigns acted as chairman of the

<sup>17</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, July 12, 1861.

<sup>18</sup> John A. Marshall, *American Bastille* . . . (Philadelphia, 1885), 403-416. See also Mahony's own book, *A Prisoner of State* (New York, 1863). Mahony's experience was not unique. Marshall cites evidence that 21 Iowans were arrested arbitrarily and later released without being charged or tried. Scattered newspaper accounts tell of the arrest of 45 other Iowans between 1861-1865 for alleged disloyalty.

<sup>19</sup> Charles E. Snyder, "Henry Clay Dean" (unpublished ms., State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City).

Democratic central committee. He refused to pay taxes for what he regarded an "unconstitutional war," thereby losing a large portion of his holdings in tax sales. Judge Mason was a West Point graduate, first justice of the Iowa Supreme Court, and 1861 candidate for governor on the Democratic ticket. Mason preferred recognition of the Confederacy to a forceful subjugation of the South and regarded himself as a strict constitutionalist.<sup>20</sup> Although he was never arrested, Mason was threatened with a lynching at Keokuk in 1863 and was probably correct when he wrote in his diary that the Burlington mayor kept a list of "23 ascertained Secessionists and of 15 more who are strongly suspected." Mason added cryptically, "I am doubtless included. . . ." <sup>21</sup> Jones was an old warrior for the Democratic party and a former United States Senator from Iowa. On the basis of a friendly letter he had written from his post as the American Minister at Bogota, New Granada, to Jefferson Davis (who was an old friend), Jones was arrested upon his return to his homeland in December, 1861. The fact that the letter was written before Jones knew of the outbreak of the war was ignored. He was never indicted or brought to trial, and was released after several months' imprisonment at Fort Lafayette, New York. He returned to Dubuque and although he preferred obscurity during the remainder of the war, opposition newspapers continued to include his name in their list of leading Copperheads.<sup>22</sup>

Behind these men, who by their actions or the prominence of their names became worthy targets of the Copperhead epithet, were dozens of newspaper editors, former Democratic officeholders, and the rank and the file of the Democratic party. Loyal to their concept of the Democratic party as the peace party, they were vulnerable targets in a period when loyalty was supposed to mean support of a war policy. "By their frankness in revealing their aims they permitted themselves to be made whipping boys on whom supporters of the war could vent the feelings generated by frustration on the battlefield," Wood Gray has noted.<sup>23</sup> The election returns in 1861 indicated to practical politicians the weakened condition of the Democratic

<sup>20</sup> Charles Mason Remey (ed.), *The Diaries of Charles Mason* (12 typescript vols., Washington, 1939), 5:493.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 534.

<sup>22</sup> Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* (4 vols., New York, 1903), 2:85; John Carl Parish, *George Wallace Jones* (Iowa City, 1912), 238-41.

<sup>23</sup> Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 140.



party in Iowa, for the party was already the "whipping boy" even though the term "Copperhead" was not yet conversational currency. The exodus from the party of former Democrats who aspired for office, and were realistic enough to see the effects of their opponents' propaganda techniques, was well under way by 1862. Nathaniel B. Baker, Cyrus Bussey, M. M. Crocker, and C. C. Cole deserted the Democrats and went with the "War Democrats" into the Republican ranks.<sup>24</sup> Such switching of party affiliation continued as late as 1876, when General James M. Tuttle, Democratic candidate for governor in 1863 and for Congress in 1866, bolted to the Republicans. He was elected to the General Assembly under their banner in 1882.<sup>25</sup>

Iowa newspaper editors who supported the war found ready readers in most localities, while the list of those favoring a peace policy constantly dwindled. Dubuque supported Mahony's *Herald*, for hundreds of German and Irish immigrants in the river city had flocked to the Democratic party during the Know-Nothing excitement of the 1850's and had remained "with the Democracy." Consistent criticism of the Lincoln administration came from the *Iowa City State Press*, *Des Moines Iowa State Journal*, *Davenport Keokuk Constitution*, and *Fairfield Constitution and Union*. There were *Keokuk Constitution*, and *Fairfield Constitution and Union*. There were several Democratic campaign papers that had a short life and then expired after the election results were counted, such as the *Burlington Argus* and *Marion Democrat*. Two German-language newspapers, *Der Davenport Demokrat* and *Der Dubuque National-Demokrat*, criticized the Lincoln administration. The Dubuque paper declared "die sudlichen Rebellen und die nordlichen Abolitionisten stehen auf demselben Grund."<sup>26</sup> Further opposition to the President and his policies came from the *Washington Democrat*, *McGregor North Iowa Times*, *Sioux City Register*, *West Union Fayette County Public Review*, *West Union Fayette County Pioneer*, *Independence Conservative*, *Keosauqua Des Moines News*, *Ottumwa Democratic Union*, and *Marengo Iowa Valley Democrat*.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> L. F. Andrews, *Pioneers of Polk County, Iowa* . . . (2 vols., Des Moines, 1908), 1:377ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:315-16. See also *Des Moines Iowa State Register*, July 18, 1876.

<sup>26</sup> The comment translated: "the southern rebels and the northern abolitionists stand on the same ground." *Der Dubuque National-Demokrat*, June 19, 1862.

<sup>27</sup> This is not intended to be a complete list of the anti-Lincoln newspapers in Iowa, but only those which the writer has either found available in the library of

Were the anti-administration newspapers disloyal? Frank Luther Mott, the Iowa-born newspaper historian, admits that "to draw a line between loyal critics of the conduct of the war and Copperheads was not then and is not now always easy."<sup>28</sup> Practically every newspaper that printed criticism of the war or of Lincoln ran the risk of being accused of treason. The editor of the Keosauqua Democratic organ found this more than he could stomach early in 1861, and commented:

When the Republicans attempt to stop the mouths of those who are opposed to the administration of Mr. Lincoln, they will find themselves mistaken — it is understood in this Country that the administration of any President, is not above the people, a thing so holy that the people should not call its acts into question. This may be republican doctrine when in power. We feel disposed to give the party opposed to the democracy, credit for being in favor of the war now, for it is the first one they ever have been in favor of since the formation of our government — is it because the government is now under their control or have they got more patriotism than usual?<sup>29</sup>

But despite the protests of editors that they could print peace propaganda, question Lincoln's policies, and still be loyal, they were all lumped into one class — Copperheads. "It is not those who criticise the flagitious acts of the Administration, or who object to its unwarrantable assumption of power, who give aid or comfort to the enemy," Dennis Mahony asserted, "but those who approve of and applaud the acts of despotism which have brought the Federal Government into disparaging contrast with the despotisms of the Old World."<sup>30</sup>

If we accept the definition of a Copperhead as one who discouraged army enlistments, denounced the draft, and predicted the war would end in a failure for the Union cause, Mahony was a Copperhead. His *Herald* printed favorable stories about the famous Confederate general, "Stonewall" Jackson, and still managed to applaud Union victories. No other Iowa editor walked the tightrope as Mahony did, but that mattered little to the opposition. The State Historical Society of Iowa or has had other positive evidence of their policy.

<sup>28</sup> Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism, A History of Newspapers in the United States . . .* (New York, 1950), 355.

<sup>29</sup> Keosauqua *Des Moines News*, May 11, 1861.

<sup>30</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, May 27, 1863.

tion, for there was no degree of loyalty taken into account. "He who is not a friend of the Union is a foe," was the chant in dozens of pro-administration newspapers. Their feeling was mirrored by public reaction. Mobs threatened the Dubuque *Herald*, Oskaloosa *Times*, and Keosauqua *Des Moines News* offices, and perhaps others, while Judge Claggett's Keokuk *Constitution* office was smashed by a mob, the type scattered, and the presses dumped into the Mississippi.<sup>31</sup>

More than mob action was used to silence the opposition press, however. At the same time that Mahony was arrested, federal officers took David Sheward, editor of the *Fairfield Constitution and Union*, into custody. Both men were sent to the Old Capitol prison. Judge Mason, who was in Washington, offered to defend them and predicted that they would never be tried. While in prison Mahony had been nominated as the Democratic candidate for Congress from the third Iowa district. "Tomorrow the Iowa [state] election comes off," Mason noted, "and they will be released without a trial as soon as that can be done without making it too apparent that they were imprisoned solely to operate upon our elections."<sup>32</sup> There is no evidence to substantiate Mason's charge except the circumstantial, but it is a fact that Sheward and Mahony were released on November 11, several weeks after the election that was won by Mahony's opponent, William B. Allison.

Considering the fact that about 135 Northern newspapers that favored a peace policy were raided or destroyed by mob action, it seems that Iowans practiced more restraint than their neighbors.<sup>33</sup> The high casualty rate of Democratic newspapers during the war period suggests that an economic boycott was the favored method of choking off opposition to the war. Such a scheme was advocated, not only for newspapers, but for all Democratic merchants. In reply to an article which urged consumers not to trade with Copperheads, the editor of the Council Bluffs *Bugle* declared that those who followed that advice would be "cutting their own throats."

They forget that in this region the substantial men — the men who have the most to sell and buy the most are Democrats. . . . They conclude that they may exhibit their patriotism (?) by declaring nonintercourse with Democrats without incurring the risk of losing

<sup>31</sup> Iowa City *Republican*, Feb. 25, 1863.

<sup>32</sup> Remey (ed.), *Mason Diary*, 6:665.

<sup>33</sup> Joe Skidmore, "The Copperhead Press and the Civil War," *Journalism Quarterly*, 16:349 (1939).

a cent. In this they are mistaken and if Democrats would do to them as they propose to do to Democrats, it would not be long before the doors of these ultras would be shut and a sign hung out "this room to let."<sup>34</sup>

In those days, when a newspaper could be purchased for less than \$800, the operation of a partisan journal in the county was deemed necessary by both parties. The Democrats lost much influence when the local Copperhead newspapers died of circulatory ailments, leaving the peace party without a public organ in the county.

The vagueness of the word "Copperhead" not only disturbs the modern historian, it also constantly harassed accused Copperheads. As seen earlier, editors of the Democratic newspapers generally insisted that to be a Democrat was to run the risk of being called a Copperhead. The *North Iowa Times* editor went further:

Some over pious political saint whose brother or nephew or some other relation has probably just received a sutler-ship or a contractorship in the army bursts out in a string of definitions under the caption, "Who are the Copperheads?" In this string of pearls at random strung we find the following:

"Every man who opposes the President's Emancipation Proclamation."

"Every man who opposes the suspension of the writ of Habeas Corpus."

"Every man who harbors constitutional objections to the means adopted by the President for ending the rebellion."

Argument with the man who conceived definitions which strike at civil liberty, and justify the assumption of despotic power by the President, would be thrown away. The writer of them is already as abject a slave as he who toils in the cotton fields of Alabama.<sup>35</sup>

Part of the trouble came from the current practice of equating the freebooter from the Missouri border region with the local druggist who had supported Douglas in 1860. And, of course, there were plenty of Iowans who did not like the personal effects of a vigorous war policy, particularly conscription.

Iowa had a splendid record for furnishing volunteers, but the prolonged war with its high casualty rate eventually made the draft inevitable. One

<sup>34</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Aug. 18, 1864.

<sup>35</sup> McGregor *North Iowa Times*, Jan. 20, 1864.



fact which probably made the draft harder to take, when it did come, was the previous assurances from many pro-Lincoln newspapers that the administration would not resort to conscription. Some German and Irish immigrants were notably recalcitrant, claiming exemption as aliens if possible. Adjutant-General Nathaniel Baker expressed his feelings on the plea of alienage thus: "I trust that public sentiment will compel all (unless here for temporary residence) who have plead [sic] alienage, to leave the State or to repent of their sins, and at the earliest possible date become citizens of the United States of America, and hereafter to do their duty."<sup>36</sup> Baker saw that the names of men who claimed an alien's exemption were printed, for all the community to see, and he expressed his belief that the plea of alienage "will stand as a disgrace to the men who made it."

Whatever the reason for the slow-down of the drafting process, the blame was heaped on the Copperheads. The Copperhead newspapers most certainly had insisted that the provision which permitted the drafted man to buy a substitute meant "this is a rich man's war and the poor man's fight." "What the conscript bill means," the *Iowa City State Press* declared, " 'Your money or your life.' "<sup>37</sup> The *Muscatine Courier* suggested that a vote for the Democratic ticket in 1863 would help stop the draft. "It is now announced that there will be no draft before the election. People of Iowa, it is for you to say whether there shall be a draft after the election. And it will stand in hand those of us who have no \$300 to buy our exemption papers, to so vote as not to require any draft."<sup>38</sup> The *Des Moines Register* reported that several men who claimed draft exemptions as aliens had been confronted with proof that they had voted. "In every instance, these voting foreigners who are claiming exemption from military duty, are Copperheads."<sup>39</sup>

The matter became serious when the so-called "draft dodgers" resorted to violence. Two federal officers sent to arrest men who had illegally avoided the draft in Poweshiek County were ambushed and killed on September 30, 1864. The murders were immediately attributed to an organization known as the "Democrat Rangers," allegedly formed as a militia

<sup>36</sup> *Report of the Adjutant General . . . of the State of Iowa, 1864-1865* (Des Moines, 1865), v.

<sup>37</sup> *Iowa City State Press*, Apr. 25, 1863.

<sup>38</sup> *Muscatine Courier*, Sept. 26, 1863.

<sup>39</sup> *Des Moines Iowa State Register*, Dec. 21, 1864.

company with a subversive program of draft resistance. Some members of the company were arrested but later released when Governor William M. Stone decided that "we cannot legitimately retain those who cannot be shown to have had some connection, either directly or indirectly, with the offense."<sup>40</sup> Getting the evidence proved difficult, but once arrested, a man's reputation was hard hit. Often the arrests were able to do what was intended, quiet the neighborhood without actual convictions.

Wherever resistance of the draft reached a militant stage, the blame was often placed on the "Knights of the Golden Circle." This organization, using the name of a group formed before the war ever began by a quixotic Ohioan with delusions of grandeur, was charged with being the catch-all for Northern traitors. Iowa historian S. H. M. Byers, writing in the 1880's, asserted that many were "paid agents of the Rebels in the South," that others were desperadoes, "and many were the ignorant scum of the democratic party, misled into wrong doing." "But," continued Byers, "all were Democrats. There was not a Republican among them."<sup>41</sup> Adjutant-General Baker had sources of information which, accepted at face value, told him there were thousands of Knights along the southern boundary.<sup>42</sup> Their alleged oath included a promise that the individual would exert himself "to unite the States of the Northwest with the Southern Confederacy." Informers painted a dark picture for Clarke and Madison counties. A man identified only as "Williams," who was working with Baker and with federal marshal H. M. Hoxie of Des Moines, declared there were at least 42,000 Knights at work in Iowa. This figure was used in official correspondence, but even more alarming was Hoxie's report that the K. G. C. was "thoroughly organized in every township of this [fifth] Congressional district, and I am informed the entire State." Recruiting officers were to be on their guard against a "fifth column," while arms and powder were to be issued only to loyal militiamen. An oath of loyalty was finally prescribed in an effort to eradicate from the home militia companies any taint of Copperheadism; the Iowan sworn into the militia solemnly declared he did not belong "to any organization, either secret or otherwise, which has for its object opposition to the present war . . . that I have no sympathy whatever

<sup>40</sup> *Report of the Adjutant General . . . 1864-1865*, 1411-15.

<sup>41</sup> S. H. M. Byers, *Iowa in War Times* (Des Moines, 1888), 180.

<sup>42</sup> *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records . . .*, Series III, Vol. III, 66-72. (Hereafter cited as *Official Records*.)

with those in rebellion, and that my desire is to see said war prosecuted with vigor until the rebellion is crushed," and peace restored.<sup>43</sup>

Whether such precautions and arrests were necessary is not altogether certain. The army sent the Judge Advocate General, Joseph Holt, to the Midwest to investigate the K. G. C. His famous report told of multifarious activities in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri, but did not mention Iowa.<sup>44</sup> Clement L. Vallandigham, the Ohio Congressman who was an extremist in his opposition to the war, was held up to the Iowa voters as a fellow conspirator with George W. Jones and Mahony without a shred of evidence.<sup>45</sup> Mahony admitted that the Democrats had formed secret societies as a counteraction forced on them by the organization of the Republican Union League. The Dubuque editor charged that Governor Kirkwood and the Union League had a secret agreement to furnish the League members with government-owned weapons "for the purpose of over-awing democrats and preventing them from exercising their political rights." In Dubuque not all were convinced by Mahony's reasoning. Bishop Clement Smyth actually reminded his diocese that those who joined any secret society would be excommunicated.<sup>46</sup>

When the Democrats cried that the K. G. C. was a Republican bogeyman, the Republicans shot back further accusations. The Knights soon went into an eclipse and were replaced by the Order of American Knights, and later still by the Sons of Liberty. The objects of these orders were all the same, the administration supporters claimed, resting chiefly in inciting desertion, resistance to the draft, aiding the enemy in deed and print, and fostering the idea of a Northwest-Southern confederacy.<sup>47</sup>

As we write, a trial for alleged conspiracy is in progress in the U. S. Court in this City, and the evidence thus far submitted shows that an Order similar in its character has been in operation in this State, and there is reason to believe it is in operation in every populous county. The Government is after this new form of Treason in all the States and if any professedly *Union Demo-*

<sup>43</sup> *Report of the Adjutant General . . . 1864-1865*, 881-2.

<sup>44</sup> *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XXXIX, Part II, 214.

<sup>45</sup> *Keokuk Weekly Gate City*, Apr. 16, May 14, 1862.

<sup>46</sup> *Dubuque Herald*, May 27, 1863; Roger J. Sullivan, "Mahony, the Unterrified" (unpublished thesis, Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa).

<sup>47</sup> *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, Nov. 5, 1864.

crat has unwittingly been drawn into it, the sooner he washes his hands of the criminality of the membership, the better it will be for him.<sup>48</sup>

These men were found guilty. In Mahaska County a government witness accused Judge Claggett of presiding over a Sons of Liberty meeting. Claggett immediately signed an affidavit disavowing the connection and vainly asked that the witness be arrested on a perjury charge.<sup>49</sup>

In most of these affairs the evidence was oral. No documentary evidence of the existence of any treasonous secret organization in Iowa has been found. That there were some secret groups opposed to the Lincoln administration in Iowa is indeed probable, but whether they had the membership or program which opponents ascribed to them seems dubious. Professor Randall declared in 1937: "It is clear now that the main purpose of the 'Knights' was to promote the success of the Democratic party, and careful historians do not accept the view that they were a dangerous organization of a thoroughly treasonable nature."<sup>50</sup> In his 1952 study of Lincoln, Randall had not altered his judgment but found further evidence to substantiate it. Randall wrote that Republicans who denounced the Democratic societies "would conveniently omit to show that in the whole broad picture Democrats were overwhelmingly loyal, patriotic, and firm for the Union."<sup>51</sup>

Closer to home was the analysis of Frank Hickenlooper, who wrote a history of Monroe County several decades after the war ended. Of the Knights of the Golden Circle he stated:

While the name was familiar to every one, the existence in Monroe County of such an organization was probably a myth. In the first place, those identified with the movement would have been apprehended by the loyal citizens of the county, and, under the high tension of excitement existing at the time, would have been roughly dealt with. . . . The public brain was heated to madness, and in the blindness of intense partisan feeling many of these acrimonious charges made by the respective political parties against each other had no real foundation. . . . The term was used more as a malediction against the more active and partisan

<sup>48</sup> Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Oct. 26, 1864.

<sup>49</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>50</sup> J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York, 1937), 389-90.

<sup>51</sup> Randall, *Lincoln the President*, 3:193.



Democrats of the county than anything else, as nearly every noted Democrat was branded as a Knight of the Golden Circle.<sup>52</sup>

To expect unanimity among over half a million people in Iowa was to expect the impossible. That the local elements of dissent were magnified out of all proportion appears to have been the case.

Of course there were incidents that gave credence to the wildest flights of the imagination. Bushwhackers (probably from across the Missouri border) burned the Fremont County courthouse at Sidney, occasionally spread terror through Davis County, and frightened Josiah B. Grinnell into a frantic appeal from Ottumwa (where he was on the hustings) for arms.<sup>53</sup> One of the most notorious incidents involved Rev. Cyphert Tally, who was fatally wounded during a gun fight brought about at South English in the summer of 1863 by hotheads in both the Republican and Democratic parties. Tally, a Baptist minister with a Southern background, rode into the village at the head of some Democratic partisans, knowing full well that the Republicans were having a rally and that tempers would be short. In a matter of moments Tally was shot down, fatally wounded. The sight of blood soon brought both sides to their senses, and the shooting stopped. The usual wild rumors of exaggerated casualties followed. The most distressing reports had between 500 and 5,000 rebellious Copperheads rendezvousing on the Skunk River, gathering forces to avenge Tally's murder. Governor Kirkwood and General Baker were called on to act by a delegation of hysterical citizens, and Kirkwood actually came to Sigourney with a promise of troops and arms. Less than a dozen militia companies were rushed to Keokuk County, but the disturbance had, in fact, ended with Tally's death. A grand jury which investigated the incident returned no indictments.<sup>54</sup>

College students in wartime Iowa were not exempt from the emotional strain that bothered their elders. The 1863 commencement at Cornell College was made the scene of a near riot when several young men and women appeared wearing Copperhead badges cut from one-cent pieces. "One girl

<sup>52</sup> Frank Hickenlooper, *An Illustrated History of Monroe County, Iowa* (Albia, Iowa, 1896), 145-6.

<sup>53</sup> *Official Records*, Series III, Vol. II, 403-404. See also *Report of the Adjutant General . . . 1864-1865*, 1419-28.

<sup>54</sup> *The History of Keokuk County* (Des Moines, 1880), 448. See also C. C. Stiles, "The Skunk River War (or Tally War)," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 19:614-31 (April, 1935).

about 18 years old who had on a copperhead pin was assaulted by the loyal women present, and a severe scuffle ensued, during which the girl aforesaid had her wearing apparel badly used up," a newspaper reported.<sup>55</sup> The young men wearing badges were forced to give them up and to shout three cheers for the Union. At the State University in Iowa City a student from Iowa County was expelled in 1863 for "wearing his copperhead badge, in defiance of the rules of the University."<sup>56</sup> The Democratic Dubuque *Herald* approved the action, declaring that "there can be no good reason" for wearing political emblems or badges in schools and colleges. "In this spirit we rather approve than censure the course of the faculty at Iowa City," the *Herald* added. "Let it be followed up by driving partisan politics out of every school and other institution of learning in the State."<sup>57</sup>

The effects of the drive against Copperheads in Iowa were reflected in the sentiments of Iowa troops stationed in the fighting zones. Sergeant Cyrus F. Boyd with the 15th Iowa Infantry noted in his diary that men in his outfit were "getting letters from 'Copperheads' in the North advising them to *desert* the *abolition* army."<sup>58</sup> Cyrus C. Carpenter wrote from his post at Corinth, Mississippi, of his desire to return to the political scene in Iowa to help "the Union party this fall, make speeches in vindication of my Gov't, and help trample Copperheadism into the earth."<sup>59</sup> When Captain M. B. Bennett of the 40th Iowa Infantry returned on leave to his home in Knoxville he was accused of speaking for Copperhead candidates at political rallies. The *Iowa State Register* scornfully noted that Bennett was "magnanimous enough to advise *his friends* (Copperheads, of course), not to resist the draft!"<sup>60</sup> LeGrand Byington, chairman of the state Democratic central committee during the 1863 election, suspected that the Republican officers of Iowa regiments would not distribute Democratic ballots to the soldier voters. He wrote Major-General U. S. Grant at Vicksburg, requesting permission to pass out Democratic tickets among the soldiers in the Army of the Tennessee. Grant replied "that loyal citizens of Northern

<sup>55</sup> Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, July 8, 1863.

<sup>56</sup> Iowa City *Republican*, May 20, 1863.

<sup>57</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, May 27, 1863.

<sup>58</sup> Mildred Throne (ed.), "Civil War Diary of Cyrus F. Boyd . . .," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 50:354 (October, 1952).

<sup>59</sup> C. C. Carpenter to Kate Burkholder, June 28, 1863, *Cyrus Clay Carpenter Papers* (State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City).

<sup>60</sup> Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Aug. 12, 1863.

States will be allowed to visit the troops from their States at any time," but cautioned that "Electioneering or any course calculated to arouse discordant feelings will be prohibited."<sup>61</sup> Byington apparently never had a chance to learn whether he was regarded by Grant as loyal or not, but the results of soldier voting were overwhelmingly against the Democrats. Word reached Byington that bundles of Democratic tickets were left untouched because officers knew that "the least effort they make in that direction would insure Kirkwood's displeasure and blast their hopes of preferment."<sup>62</sup>

Considering the party passions aroused, agreement by Copperheads and pro-administration spokesmen on any issue seemed unlikely. Many newspapers supporting Lincoln's policies shrank from the "Black Republican" label applied to them by the Democrats. Admittedly finding the Negro distasteful, they nevertheless managed to portray the Copperheads as more unsavory. The Des Moines *Register* reported rumors of a dance attended by Negroes and white women. "This is horrible if true!" the *Register* commented, then went on to say that the situation was brought about by a "Copperhead Scribe" who had "taken a few select white females of his own acquaintance. . . ."<sup>63</sup> At another time, the same newspaper had declared that "It is true that the Negroes belong to a degraded race; but it is equally true that the devils who malignantly abuse them, and deride the Government, are more degraded by far than the greasiest, dirtiest Ethiopian whose body finds a resting place in the 'Lincum Hotel.'"<sup>64</sup> Iowans devoted to the antislavery cause added blind prejudice to the other Copperhead faults. "'Nigger on the brain' is so deep rooted in the Copperhead, or Democratic, skull, that all thought of justice to the human race is driven therefrom," the *Fairfield Ledger* stated.<sup>65</sup>

This anti-Negro attitude in wartime Iowa may have resulted in part from the Southern background of many Iowa families, but that factor would be meaningless when taking into account the Irish and German prejudices against the Negro. A further explanation came from Wood Gray, who noted in his study of the Copperheads that "the views and prejudices of

<sup>61</sup> U. S. Grant to Byington, Aug. 4, 1863, *LeGrand Byington Papers* (State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City).

<sup>62</sup> George Van Hosen to Byington, Aug. 20, 1863, *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in *Marengo Iowa County Review*, Jan. 14, 1864.

<sup>64</sup> Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Aug. 5, 1863.

<sup>65</sup> *Fairfield Ledger*, July 13, 1865.



the immigrant generation tended to persist and to be transmitted to their descendants." Gray discerned among immigrants a definite hatred of the slave labor system which apparently offered men of wealth "an unfair economic advantage."

But also — and failure to grasp this fact has led to much misunderstanding of the attitude of the Midwest toward sectional issues of the 1840's and '50's — this hatred extended with equal or greater fervor to the Negro himself, and was coupled with the ever-present fear that any weakening of this bondage would permit him to migrate northward.<sup>66</sup>

The Democrats in Iowa maintained a strong prejudice against the Negro, and attempted to use the issue in state elections even after the Constitution had been altered to give the Negro citizenship. The Copperheads welcomed the label of an anti-Negro party, as the Burlington *Argus* made clear in 1862 when it declared: "There is not now, and cannot be, but two parties in the loyal States arrayed against each other at the coming election — the party that stands upon the broad platform of the Constitution, and the abolition party . . . composed of abolition fanatics and plunder seekers of every hue and stripe. . . ."<sup>67</sup>

Along with the odium attached to the Negro, the Copperheads in Iowa attempted to make political capital out of the agrarian unrest brought on by the war. Worthless banknotes, rotting produce, and high freight rates helped foster feeling against the Lincoln administration after the outbreak of war. Farmers who had voted for Buchanan and Douglas found it easy to shift the blame for declining farm prices to the Republican doorstep. The banknotes of many Wisconsin and Illinois banks became worthless when the Southern state bond investments of those institutions were lost. "Our farmers have already lost heavily by the 'cat' institutions," the Iowa City pro-Republican *State Reporter* commented, and with specie available the demand was for "a little more gold and a little less currency."<sup>68</sup> Hard money became scarce as grain prices slumped, while wages for farm laborers increased because of the manpower shortage. The obvious reason for the decline in farm prices was that the Mississippi, a natural avenue of commerce, was blockaded, thus choking off the grain market. Railroad

<sup>66</sup> Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 23.

<sup>67</sup> Burlington *Argus*, July 4, 1862.

<sup>68</sup> Iowa City *State Reporter*, May 22, 1861.



companies, finding their biggest competitor shackled by the war, boosted their rates by 30 to 40 per cent.<sup>69</sup>

Following the defeat at first Manassas, wheat sold at Dubuque for 42 cents a bushel, oats brought a dime, butter was available for six cents a pound, and eggs were worth from three to five cents a dozen.<sup>70</sup> Iowa farmers received an average price of \$3.41 per hundredweight for their hogs during the first year of war, with corn bringing an average of 16 cents at Christmas in 1861.<sup>71</sup> Cattle prices during the early months of the war sank lower as freight rates on the railroads increased, causing some drovers to drive their cattle overland to Burlington, Dubuque, or Chicago rather "than to pay the ordinary fair [sic] on the road, on their return, in obedience to an order from the officers of the C. B. & Q. R. R."<sup>72</sup>

High-handed methods adopted by the railroads caused Iowans in all walks of life to show concern, but to the "Peace Democrats" who had warned against a breakup of the Union the gouge was typical of eastern capitalists. Even a Republican newspaper found the situation intolerable, with the Dubuque *Weekly Times* declaring:

The freight bills we have to pay between here and New York are ruinous, extortionate. The best amber Iowa wheat in New York is worth \$1.25 per bushel. Now let us see what it costs to get it there from Dubuque:

The railroad freight, ferriage, drayage, etc. to Chicago	15
Lake freight to Buffalo	25
Canal freight to New York	18
Storage commissions, insurance interest	5
Total	63

Leaving a balance of 62 cents to be realized by the shipper in case none of the grain is lost or spoiled on the way. . . . When it is known that it costs 53 cents to get a bushel of corn from Dubuque to New York, where it is worth only 62 cents, it is easy to understand why it is worth only 10 cents here. Feed your corn to stock.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Earle D. Ross, *Iowa Agriculture* (Iowa City, 1951), 53.

<sup>70</sup> Dubuque *Weekly Times*, July 11, 1861.

<sup>71</sup> Norman V. Strand, "Prices of Farm Products in Iowa, 1851-1940," *Iowa State College Research Bulletin* No. 303 (May, 1942), 938.

<sup>72</sup> "Jefferson County" in *Eighth Report of the Iowa State Agricultural Society* . . . (Des Moines, 1863), 245.

<sup>73</sup> Dubuque *Weekly Times*, Oct. 31, 1861.

Obviously, the lack of competition from the river carriers permitted the railroads to make their own terms.

Discounting partisanship, there was some basis for the Democratic newspaper charge that "hard times" had struck Iowa. "Let the mechanics and laboring men of all classes who are now feeling the pressure of hard times, remember that it has all been caused by the Republican party," the *Washington Democrat* counseled.<sup>74</sup> "The Banks loan to Brokers, and the Brokers shave the people," the *Burlington Argus* grumbled. "The public works have stores at one end and Broker's shops at the other, to grind the laborer out of his daily bread. The county is bankrupt-covered, thatched and buried in mortgage."<sup>75</sup>

The grievance against the railroads was real, and if the farmers burdened with ten-cent oats had not blamed the Lincoln administration it would indeed have been remarkable, despite the fact that criticism of the administration was called treason. The dissent was more noticeable in Illinois, where Major-General John A. McClernand advised Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton that the river blockade placed the shippers from the upper Mississippi region at the mercy of eastern railroad combinations. McClernand warned Stanton that unless the Mississippi was reopened soon "a new party will spring into existence" that would favor recognizing the Confederacy as a means of renewing commerce on the river.<sup>76</sup>

Iowa farmers, squeezed between low prices and high shipping costs, were equally certain that the river had to be opened to their products. Secretary J. H. Wallace of the Iowa State Agricultural Society reported in 1863:

Aside from the devastations and horrors of war which have fallen so heavily on many portions of the land, the attempt to violate and set at nought the laws of trade and exchange of commodities which God impressed on this continent when He created it, has had a most crushing effect upon all the permanent industrial interests of the North-West, and no portion has suffered and is suffering so much as our own State.

With the Mississippi closed, the Iowa farmer had been left "to the tender mercies of relentless gamblers in Rail Road stocks." Wallace's words con-

<sup>74</sup> *Washington Democrat*, March 5, 1861.

<sup>75</sup> *Burlington Argus*, May 24, 1862.

<sup>76</sup> Major-General John A. McClernand to E. M. Stanton, Nov. 10, 1862, *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XVII, Part II, 333.

tained the hint of the so-called "Granger Laws" of a later day when he declared:

So far as roads East of us are concerned, we can do nothing compulsory, but as regards our own State, by unitedly meeting the question, we can, at least, have it determined whether the Rail Roads control the State, or the State controls the Rail Roads. And if the latter, we can establish by law, a tariff of charges, of so much per ton per mile, that will protect the farmer until his produce gets beyond the limits of the State.

Wallace believed that railroads were "at best but a poor substitute for the Mississippi," and no set of farmers was more interested in reopening the river than those from Iowa. "The grain growing interests of this State are absolutely dead without it."<sup>77</sup>

In these circumstances the extreme views of the Dubuque *Herald* staff had their hearing. Convinced that the South could not, or should not, be subjugated, the *Herald* openly declared that destiny linked the Mississippi Valley to the South. "With the Mississippi in common between us and the South, with a line of communication open to the seaboard through a friendly and not a hostile Confederacy," the *Herald* could only see the natural alliance blossoming into something more.<sup>78</sup> Such a view meant a renunciation of the Democratic slogan — "The Constitution as it is, the Union as it was" — but the *Herald* was so thoroughly in the peace camp by 1863 that most of its proposals postulated the failure of the war. Mahony's chimerical dream of a Northwest Confederacy was dashed, however, by the upsurge of farm prices and the opening of the Mississippi by the fall of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863. With greenback inflation at hand, and the route to the ocean once more unfettered, the days of ten-cent oats in Iowa were over. By November, 1864, Iowa wheat was selling for \$1.00 to \$1.50, oats brought up to 50 cents, and corn sold for as much as 75 cents a bushel.<sup>79</sup> In that same month criticism of Lincoln continued, but a 26,000-vote majority in Iowa over the Democratic candidate McClellan indicated a rising agrarian approbation of the President's policies.

So far, the Copperhead in Iowa had been sound and fury. It is logical

<sup>77</sup> *Eighth Report of the Iowa State Agricultural Society*, 126-7.

<sup>78</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, Jan. 21, 1863.

<sup>79</sup> Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Nov. 9, 1864. See also Strand, "Prices of Farm Products in Iowa," 955-75.

to ask: where did the Copperheads have their real strength in Iowa? In a state predominantly agricultural, some of the support for the "Peace Democrats" must have come from farmers. Professor Frank L. Klement has interpreted Midwestern Copperheadism as a movement based on a "faith in Jeffersonian principles."<sup>80</sup> "The protest of lamenting laborers and disgruntled agrarians underwrote Midwestern Copperheadism," he writes elsewhere.<sup>81</sup> Unquestionably, many Iowa Copperheads were immigrant laborers, but many more were men of the soil, and they were in a class apart from the peace party to the east where "the Copperhead country was characterized by small homesteads, poor soils, and widespread illiteracy."<sup>82</sup>

There was no "Copperhead country" as such in Iowa. "Peace Democrats" were present in every county. The Copperhead strongholds in Iowa, i. e., where the "Peace Democrats" were able to carry the county in the elections of either 1861, 1863, or 1864, reached from Keokuk to Sioux City. Twenty counties fell into this category, following no geographic pattern whatever. Eight counties were in the southern tier, not more than seventy miles from the Missouri border. Central Iowa harbored eight more, and four were in the northern tier.<sup>83</sup> Soil fertility as a factor in determining Copperhead localities fits no yardstick in Iowa, for twelve counties came in the dark-colored silt loam region, and virtually none of the counties was comparable in its soil texture or topography to those of southern Indiana or southeastern Ohio. The presence of newspapers, libraries, schools, and colleges in the Iowa Democratic areas suggests that the literacy rate was comparable to that of other Midwestern communities, although an accurate gauge does not exist. Any attempt to fit the Iowa Copperhead into a die-stamped pattern is futile, however, because of the diverse backgrounds of the men who opposed the war policy. The statistics only show that the hard core of the Copperhead movement was located exactly where one would expect it, in the areas voting Democratic in pre-war Iowa.

<sup>80</sup> Frank L. Klement, "Middle Western Copperheadism and the Genesis of the Granger Movement," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 38:687 (March, 1952).

<sup>81</sup> Frank L. Klement, "Economic Aspects of Middlewestern Copperheadism," *The Historian*, 14:42 (Autumn, 1951).

<sup>82</sup> Klement, "Middle Western Copperheadism and the Genesis of the Granger Movement," 680.

<sup>83</sup> The twenty counties were: Allamakee, Appanoose, Audubon, Boone, Buena Vista, Calhoun, Davis, Decatur, Dubuque, Fremont, Johnson, Lee, O'Brien, Polk, Marion, Shelby, Sioux, Wapello, Wayne, and Webster.



It is not surprising to note that, generally speaking, war prosperity mounted in Iowa while criticism of Lincoln's administration diminished. Mahony had departed from the *Herald* office in the fall of 1863, leaving the state's principal Copperhead paper in the hands of Stilson Hutchins. Hutchins carried on Mahony's policies but lacked the Irishman's experience and zeal. LeGrand Byington must have been discouraged during the presidential campaign of 1864, when he was corresponding with such "Peace Democrats" as Allen G. Thurman and Fernando Wood, vainly attempting to carry Iowa for McClellan. In August, Byington had called a "peace convention" which met in Iowa City and passed a series of resolutions, including one which declared that the delegates were "opposed to the further prosecution of the war, believing that the Union can be preserved in its integrity by the President agreeing to an armistice, and by calling a National Convention of Sovereign States. . . ."<sup>84</sup> The convention and the resolutions were a gesture, just as the minority report of State Senator F. M. Knoll had been in the General Assembly a few months earlier. Objecting to the joint resolution endorsing the Lincoln administration, Knoll wrote that "whilst Mr. Lincoln may be a patriot, he is nevertheless ignorant of the first duties of a patriot, which are respect for and obedience to the laws and constitution of his country."<sup>85</sup>

Genuine resentment of the Lincoln administration came not only from Copperheads, however. Widespread civilian dissatisfaction expressed at the Iowa polls was overwhelmed by absentee ballots from the army. Although Lincoln lost only ten Iowa counties to McClellan, the soldier vote, which gave the President 17,252 votes to 1,920 for McClellan, swung the balance in many localities.<sup>86</sup> Returns from the army camps indicated the rapid headway the Republican party had made among Iowa troops, for the Republican majority had climbed, while the Copperhead opprobrium made the soldier's choice of the Democratic ticket an anomaly. "Vote as you shoot" was the slogan. From here it was only a step for the veterans, with their powerful Grand Army of the Republic, to align themselves with the party that never "fired on our rear."

Following Appomattox, use of the term "Copperhead" in Iowa and the nation might have been expected to cease. Such was not the case. To aid,

<sup>84</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, Aug. 31, 1864.

<sup>85</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1864, 367.

<sup>86</sup> *Des Moines Iowa State Register*, Dec. 7, 1864.

abet, and color the public memory after 1865, several Iowa historians set up or accepted the stereotype of the Iowa Copperhead. S. H. M. Byers, who had served with the Fifth Iowa Infantry and had been a prisoner of war, returned to his home state and in 1888 published *Iowa in War Times*. Byers painted a lurid picture of disloyalty in Iowa. "It was a patient, long-forbearing people in Iowa then, that did not rise in its wrath and swing these worst opponents of their country from the nearest gallows," he wrote. "Possibly, the ignominy that was to follow Iowa 'Copperheads' . . . through life, was a punishment worse than death."<sup>87</sup> Byers classed as Copperheads those "vagabonds and ruffians out of the old Democratic party, [who] allied themselves with the traitors' camp." Byers' book went into hundreds, possibly thousands, of Iowa homes in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In 1893 H. W. Lathrop's book, *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood*, was published with the approval of the wartime governor. Lathrop, although he described the "vile and venomous treason" of the "home-bred traitors," was less vitriolic than Byers.<sup>88</sup>

More objective than either Byers or Lathrop was Benjamin F. Gue, a politician-newspaperman who had served in the General Assembly during the war. Gue devoted an entire volume to the Civil War in his four-volume *History of Iowa*, published in 1903. He accepted uncritically reports that 30,000 Copperheads had banded together in the Knights of the Golden Circle throughout Iowa, and he accused the Copperheads of misrepresentation, slander, and "falsehoods industriously circulated."<sup>89</sup> Some treasonable acts were attributed to the Copperheads, but Gue also noted that few Iowans were convicted of treason and that the leading Copperhead editor, Dennis A. Mahony of Dubuque, was a man of "marked ability." When Cyrenus Cole's *A History of the People of Iowa* was published in 1921, the more temperate views of Gue were again offered to readers.<sup>90</sup> Recent historical works on the Copperhead movement tend to include Iowa somewhat within the Midwestern Copperhead program of the war years, and one writer has concluded that the Southern background or origins of

<sup>87</sup> Byers, *Iowa in War Times*, 50.

<sup>88</sup> H. W. Lathrop, *The Life and Times of Samuel J. Kirkwood* (Iowa City, 1893), 238, 240.

<sup>89</sup> Gue, *History of Iowa*, 2:58, 83.

<sup>90</sup> Cyrenus Cole, *A History of the People of Iowa* (Cedar Rapids, 1921), 362.

many Iowans accounted for their wartime acts "to help the Confederacy of the South realize its aims."<sup>91</sup>

The historian was not alone in his effort to explain the Copperhead species. The fact that "Copperhead" remained in the Iowan's postwar vocabulary strengthens the contention of Democratic editors who accused the Republicans of making political capital out of the expression. LeGrand Byington refused to pay taxes during the war on the ground that the revenues would help support an unconstitutional war. Some of his lands were sold at tax sales, and in the spring of 1866 he was fined \$1,300 and costs for failing to affix revenue stamps to legal documents.<sup>92</sup> "That's a dear lesson for Mr. Byington!" the *Cedar Valley Times* reported. "This kind of copperheadism *don't pay!*" Byington, who lost a fortune by his intransigence, might have asked what kind *had* paid. After a wayward Republican postmaster was arrested in 1867 for embezzling funds, the *Iowa City State Press* asked readers to consider how the *Des Moines Register* would have reported the affair had the offender been a Democrat. The headlines would have screamed, said the *Press*, "'A Copperhead thief come to grief,' — 'Another rebel sympathizer robbing govt.' — and so on *ad nauseam*."

It has been the practice, especially of the *State Register*, for years, when a horse was stolen or a crime of any kind committed in any part of the state, to head the item with something akin to the above, and that without knowing or caring what the criminal's political belief was, but acting solely through a wanton desire to cast any slur in its power upon its political opponents. . . .<sup>93</sup>

Aroused by the demand of a Democrat who wanted an explicit definition of "Copperhead," a Cedar Rapids editor said the expression covered "the almost extinct genus *Democrat*," all who opposed prosecution of the recent war, the K. G. C., those who discouraged the draft, those "who planned the assassination of President Lincoln," and an assortment of other conspiracies. Furthermore, they "are Copperheads who are trying to put more political power into the hands of rebels than that allowed the loyal men . . . [and who] yet co-operates with rebels by endorsing President Johnsons [sic] policy. . . ."<sup>94</sup> When Johnson's break with the Radical Re-

<sup>91</sup> Frank C. Arena, "Southern Sympathizers in Iowa During Civil War Period," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 30:538 (January, 1951).

<sup>92</sup> Cedar Rapids *Cedar Valley Times*, April 5, 1866.

<sup>93</sup> *Iowa City State Press*, June 12, 1867.

<sup>94</sup> Cedar Rapids *Cedar Valley Times*, Sept. 27, 1866.



publicans became obvious, Iowa newspapers assailed him as a Copperhead. So it appeared that "Copperhead" was indeed the catch-all phrase the Cedar Rapids editor believed it to be.<sup>95</sup>

And it was a persistent curse on the Democratic party. By 1872 the Democrats, minority that they had become in Iowa, were disgusted with their opponents' tactics of "waving the bloody shirt," shouting Copperhead, and pointing a stern finger at the Democrats. A Sioux City editor asked:

Can't some inventive Radical [Republican] coin some new word or term to harp on. "Rebel Democracy" — although at one time a God send for loud-mouthed stumpers, is getting nauseous with people who, believing in the restoration of the Union, don't want to battle with nothing more than a past shadow and a present myth.<sup>96</sup>

The efficacy of the "Copperhead" chant was nonetheless obvious. The Republican monopoly of state and federal offices became almost complete, forcing any Democratic politician with serious ambitions either to renounce his affiliation or move to another state.<sup>97</sup>

Then something happened. Grover Cleveland was elected president in 1884. The followers of Jeff Davis had at last triumphed, the *Iowa State Register* lamented, and an editorial asked "Aren't the greys on deck again?" "Is not there a good deal of hypocrisy [sic] in this simulated rage by the Republicans at the mention of Jeff Davis' name," the *Dubuque Herald* rejoined. "His name is nothing now — except a bugaboo to these Republicans." Still using what some Democrats contended was "the old saw, new set," the state's leading newspaper now alluded to the Northern Democrats in Congress as Copperheads. "The Copperhead among men was and is like Kentucky among the states," the *Register* declared, "as mean as any one during the war, and a good deal meaner than any one

<sup>95</sup> Occasionally the Democrats defied their opponents by flaunting the detested word as the title of a newspaper. The *Pella Copperhead* was outspoken in its opposition to the Republicans from 1866 until 1868, when the plant was moved and the newspaper became the *Ottumwa Copperhead*. The name was changed to the *Ottumwa Democrat* in 1870 or 1871. See Winifred Gregory (ed.), *American Newspapers, 1821-1936* (New York, 1937), 180-81; *Pella Chronicle*, May 8, 1930.

<sup>96</sup> *Sioux City Weekly Times*, July 20, 1872.

<sup>97</sup> It is interesting to note the use of the phrase, "a former Democrat," in the biographical section of many county and state histories printed between 1865 and 1900. For example, see Andrews, *Pioneers of Polk County*, 2:133, 154, 316.



since, because he was never whipped.”<sup>98</sup> The practice of still calling Democrats “Copperheads” was not uniform with Iowa’s Republican newspapers, however. That the term died a slow death is evidenced, on the other hand, by the *Register’s* reference to Cleveland’s second administration — “The present conscript, copperhead, and rebel administration.” The date was February 22, 1895.

Indeed, the odium attached to the word “Copperhead” was such that the Republicans never went so far as to apply the hated label to one of their own party when the man was accused of apostacy. It took a complete switch of allegiance to complete the process. In 1877 President Hayes’s policy regarding the South brought down on his head the scorn of most Iowa Republicans. They accused him of trickery, dishonesty, and back-sliding, but not Copperheadism. Its patience worn thin, the *Des Moines Register* simply scorned Hayes as “the man without a party.”<sup>99</sup>

To assess the role of Iowa Copperheads during the Civil War with finality would require special, separate studies of the outstanding characters involved, the court records, newspapers, and the contemporary opinions as discerned through diary accounts and letters. The best evidence indicates that the Iowans who wished the Confederacy well were few indeed, and there were still fewer who actually did commit acts that could be construed as treasonable. True enough, the sons of former Governor Hempstead and Senator Jones did serve under the Confederate flag, but their cases were the exception and not the rule. Though the word “Copperhead” did not come into use in Iowa until the war was well under way, it was an expression that aptly covered real and alleged “fifth column” activity in Iowa. As a shibboleth in Republican hands it was used as a political weapon until the end of the century, long after the expression had any genuine basis in fact.

The Iowa Copperhead, with a few exceptions, was not a traitor or a Southern sympathizer, and there were probably as many Iowa Copperheads from foreign lands as there were from Southern areas. Bushwhackers and freebooters up from Missouri were a definite problem, but in the heat and passion of the war there was little effort to distinguish honest critics from outright traitors or invaders. Hence the word “Copperhead” was soon used to heap scorn on anti-administration elements, “draft dodgers,”

<sup>98</sup> *Des Moines Iowa State Register*, Jan. 23, 1885.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1877.

deserters, anti-Negro groups, vagrants, and, incidentally, convicted traitors. Guilty at times of extremism, the only charge that could be validly applied to Mahony, Byington, Mason, Jones, Sheward, Claggett, Hutchins, and the rest was that they would not conform to a pattern of administration support. They were conservatives, at a time when conservatism was decried by zealous patriots as treason. They were for the status quo. They were the losers. Iowa's Copperheads have been under a cloud for almost a century because the histories of their era were written by the winners.

## C. C. CARPENTER IN THE 1858 IOWA LEGISLATURE\*

*By Mildred Throne*

The frontier at mid-century offered a wide variety of careers to young men. Tradition has pictured the pioneer as a man with a hoe and an axe, hacking a farm out of the wilderness. Equally important to the opening of new lands, however, were the townsmen — merchants, lawyers, doctors, preachers, mill-owners, blacksmiths, newspaper editors — who brought the commercial products, the law, and the culture of the East to the new West. And all of them had one overriding interest — politics. National issues were argued on the frontier with no less enthusiasm than in the East, and in any new community a man with a flair for oratory — be he lawyer or blacksmith — might soon find himself campaigning for public office. Such a man was Cyrus Clay Carpenter of Fort Dodge.

In 1857 the political scene in Iowa was changing rapidly. Iowa's Republican party had been launched in February, 1856; the state capital had been moved inland from Iowa City to Des Moines; and a new constitution had been written. The legislature that would meet in 1858 would be the first to gather at the new capital of Des Moines, in the new statehouse on Iowa's "Capitol Hill," under a new constitution.

One of the members of this 1858 legislature — the Seventh General Assembly — was young C. C. Carpenter who was making his debut in politics. Carpenter, a native of Pennsylvania, had come to Fort Dodge from Ohio in 1854, at the age of twenty-five. He had been schoolteacher, surveyor, and land agent, and his many trips through northwestern Iowa had made him a host of friends. An interest in politics and his abilities as a stump speaker soon brought him to the attention of the Republicans, and his rise in the party began.<sup>1</sup> During 1857 Carpenter worked hard for

\*This article is a chapter from a forthcoming full-length biography of Governor Cyrus Clay Carpenter.

<sup>1</sup> Biographical sketches of Carpenter appear in *Biographical Record and Portrait Album of Webster and Hamilton Counties, Iowa* . . . (Chicago, 1888), 205-208; *The Biographical Record of Webster County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1902), 230-37; *Des Moines Register*, Sept. 27, 1871; *The United States Biographical Dictionary* . . .

the success of Iowa's burgeoning Republican party, and his reward was the nomination for the legislature from his district.

In 1856 Iowa Republicans had fought the presidential campaign with vigor, enthusiasm, and success. A majority of the 92,000 Iowans who had voted in that year had preferred Republican Fremont to Democrat Buchanan. Now, with 1857, came the contest for the governorship and for a legislature which would elect a new United States Senator. James W. Grimes, who had entered the Iowa statehouse as a Whig and was now leaving it as a Republican, had his eye on the United States Senate. It was, therefore, up to the "Grimes men" of the party to choose a legislature which would send him to Washington. Webster County's delegation to the state convention included Cyrus Carpenter.<sup>2</sup>

When the Republicans met at Iowa City on August 19 there were 158 delegates present to cast the 338 votes of the convention. Bad roads and long distances had kept many of the delegates at home, but those present held the proxies for the missing members, frequently the case in frontier conventions, so that the business of the meeting went forward as planned. Carpenter, aside from representing Webster County, had been designated as the alternate for the Hamilton County delegate, at that county's convention on August 13.<sup>3</sup>

The convention met, organized, nominated, and resolved in the manner of all political gatherings. Ralph P. Lowe, a lawyer from Lee County, won the nomination for governor, while Oran Faville from Mitchell County, a former teacher turned farmer, received the lieutenant-governor's place on the ticket. After adopting a platform that endorsed freedom, deplored slavery, and congratulated Iowans on their new constitution and their retiring governor, the convention adjourned and the members scattered to their homes.<sup>4</sup>

Hardly had Carpenter reached Fort Dodge than he was sending out a call, as chairman of the Webster County Republicans, for a district convention to nominate a candidate for the 1858 state legislature. The 13th

*Iowa Volume* (Chicago, 1878), 781-3; *Dictionary of American Biography*, 3:508-509. Carpenter was born at Harford, Pennsylvania, Nov. 24, 1829.

<sup>2</sup> Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, July 30, 1857.

<sup>3</sup> Report of Hamilton County convention, held on August 13, 1857, in *Carpenter Papers* (State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City).

<sup>4</sup> For a report of the convention, see Mitchell *Mitchell County Republican*, Aug. 27, 1857; for the platform, see Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Sept. 3, 1857.



district consisted of the seventeen counties of Cerro Gordo, Worth, Franklin, Hancock, Wright, Winnebago, Kossuth, Webster, Hamilton, Calhoun, Pocahontas, Palo Alto, Sac, Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, and Emmet.<sup>5</sup> The district convention met at Webster City in Hamilton County on September 9, with Charles Aldrich, Carpenter's close friend, as chairman. Thirty votes, divided among seven men, were cast on the informal ballot for representative, with Carpenter getting the largest number — fourteen. After several of the candidates had made "some very appropriate remarks," the first formal ballot was taken: Carpenter now received sixteen votes, while fourteen were divided among three other contenders. On motion, the nomination was made unanimous for Carpenter, and his political career was launched. The convention then endorsed the state platform and the administration of Governor Grimes and closed with "three hearty cheers" for the candidate.<sup>6</sup>

Carpenter wasted no time in opening his campaign. Even before the Democrats of the district had chosen their candidate, he had spoken at Algona where a "large audience" exhibited the "utmost enthusiasm." When the Democrats chose another Fort Dodge man for their candidate — John F. Duncombe — people looked forward to some rousing joint debates between the opposing candidates. But, defying accepted practice and tradition, Duncombe declined Carpenter's efforts to lure him into a face-to-face meeting. Rather, Duncombe relied on attacks upon Carpenter in his newspaper, the Fort Dodge *Sentinel*. Since Fort Dodge had no Republican paper at that time, Carpenter depended on the Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, edited by his friend Charles Aldrich, for support. Aldrich was ever ready to meet the personal attacks made by the *Sentinel* and to return them with good measure. In this year of rising bitterness over the whole troubling issue of slavery, local considerations received little attention. Although Carpenter and Duncombe were running for a seat in a state legislature, where their job would be to legislate on local issues, the Republicans branded any attempt to bring up state or district problems during the campaign as mere "bogus" Democratic tricks. The Democrats, on the other

<sup>5</sup> Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Aug. 27, 1857. Actually, there were 18 counties in the district. Humboldt County had been created out of Webster County by the 1856-1857 legislature, but had not been included by name in the law of that session that established the representative districts. See *Laws of Iowa, 1856-1857*, Chaps. 132, 147.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 17, 1857.



hand, brought in every local issue they could, probably to avoid defending the pro-slavery cause, a most unpopular subject in Iowa. Carpenter's campaign, commented his defender in Webster City, was conducted on a high level of statesmanship, in "shocking contrast to the cuddling, sneaking operations of the Democracy, who go around 'seeking who they can take in' with local clap-trap. . . ." <sup>7</sup>

John F. Duncombe in many respects was a worthy and popular opponent. He, like Carpenter, was a native of Pennsylvania. Both men were of almost the same age, Carpenter being two years the elder. Duncombe had had many of the opportunities denied to Cyrus, who had been orphaned at the age of twelve, and had had to make his own way in the world. Duncombe had grown up on his father's farm and been sent to Allegheny College where he had studied law. After being admitted to the bar in 1855 he had migrated to the West, settling in Fort Dodge in April of that year. There he began the practice of law; in 1856 he had widened his activities by establishing the town's first newspaper, the *Sentinel*, in company with A. S. White. Webster County was, and would remain for many years, a strong island of "the Democracy" in the swelling tide of Republicanism, and some credit for this should go to Duncombe and his newspaper.

Democrat Duncombe and Republican Carpenter, who become the leaders of their respective parties in northwestern Iowa, were opposites in many ways — Duncombe, tall, cold, and formal; Carpenter, short, warm, and friendly; Duncombe, a financial success in everything he tried, from newspaper editing to railroading; Carpenter, a poor hand at money making. In only one field was Carpenter almost always the victor. Politically, he was on the right side at the right time, while Duncombe had the misfortune to back a party rapidly losing power in Iowa. Benjamin F. Gue, years later, wrote of Duncombe: "Had he been a Republican he might have attained the highest official positions in the State." <sup>8</sup>

The campaign between these two men ran on through September, with charges and counter-charges. Although the voters were divided on the slavery question, no one disagreed on the need for railroads. Therefore, that was one of the "local issues" on which the Democrats attacked Carpenter, claiming that he did not support the proposed Dubuque & Pacific Railroad. Governor Grimes wrote to Carpenter after the election: "Jones [the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 17, 24, Oct. 8, 1857.

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . . (4 vols., New York, 1903), 4:81.

incumbent Senator, Democrat George Wallace Jones] & his friends had their hearts set upon electing Duncombe as he is a warm friend of Jones and an agent of his Rail Road. The whole influence of the Rail Road was brought to bear against you." So great was the pressure on this one issue that Carpenter felt called upon to state his position unequivocally at a Republican rally in Webster City on October 8, when he was under direct attack. The Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, in reporting the meeting, underscored Carpenter's statement of his position: "He believes the state by all constitutional means should foster the D. & P. R. R. and hasten the day of its completion. Any such law which might be introduced would receive his hearty support if he was elected."<sup>9</sup>

As the time of the election drew near the *Sentinel* increased its criticism of Carpenter, accusing him of "abusing Duncombe personally," a charge which the *Freeman* indignantly denied. On October 6, C. B. Richards of Fort Dodge wrote to Carpenter, who was out on canvass, that ". . . the Dem are working like hell," getting up "bogus tickets with your name spelled wrong." Since each party printed its own ballots, this was an ever-present danger and a popular practice in frontier elections. Richards advised Carpenter to "blow on this like the Devil." Two days later the *Freeman* reported this trick to its readers, urging them to "Beware of Split Tickets," and claiming that "the Democracy have circulated about four cart-loads of split tickets throughout this District."<sup>10</sup> Thus, in a whirl of accusations and denials, the campaign came to an end, and on October 13 the voters went to the polls.

"Glory Enough for One Day!" Thus the *Freeman* announced Carpenter's election.<sup>11</sup> In spite of headlines and enthusiasm, however, it had been a narrow victory. Because of the distances and difficulty of communication in northwestern Iowa, it was October 29 before the *Freeman* could print its triumphant headline. Up in Dickinson County on the Minnesota border, for instance, after the canvass of the ballots showed an almost unanimous vote for Carpenter, the question arose as to how the returns were to reach Fort Dodge. One man finally volunteered to make the long trip, but when

<sup>9</sup> J. W. Grimes to CCC, Nov. 11, 1857, in *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 22:486 (October, 1940); Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Oct. 8, 1857.

<sup>10</sup> C. B. Richards to CCC, Oct. 2, 1857, *Carpenter Papers*; Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Oct. 8, 1857.

<sup>11</sup> Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Oct. 29, 1857.

only part way to Webster County he met Emmett Carpenter, Cyrus' brother, who was on his way north to collect the returns from the isolated counties around the lakes. Since the election was close, every vote counted, and Dickinson County voters liked to believe that their returns swung the balance to their favorite.<sup>12</sup>

So close was the vote, in fact, that there was some talk that Duncombe might contest it, but it was soon evident, as the returns from the rest of the state came in, that the election had been a Republican victory and that one more Democrat in the House would not change the vote for United States Senator — the paramount issue in the campaign. The Republicans had elected all the state officers and had gained control of the General Assembly by a margin of 22 to 14 in the Senate and 41 to 31 in the House. The Republican victory had been a narrow one, however. In the presidential election of 1856 Fremont had carried Iowa by a majority of 8,000; in 1857 Lowe was elected governor by a margin of only about 2,500 votes. The Dubuque *Times* scolded the party for this lack of interest, accused the Democrats of producing a "feeling of indifference," and warned Republicans that they "must become better organized and turn out more fully, or they will lose the State." Such worries were far from the thoughts of Carpenter and his supporters, following the election. Webster City held a "Carpenter Supper" on November 4, with feasting, dancing, and the drinking of toasts. The local paper was at pains to point out that "no wines or liquors" were drunk during these toasts — a fact that would "astonish the 'rank and file' of Democracy, and probably the leaders." Carpenter made the traditional speech of thanks, concluding in properly glowing terms, and promising that he would look back upon the occasion as "the most cheering 'Oasis' in the Desert of my life."<sup>13</sup>

During the two months that ensued before the meeting of the Seventh General Assembly, Carpenter, like all members of that legislature, was besieged with advice, suggestions, and requests for support. The first big issue which attracted attention, as soon as the makeup of the legislature had been determined, was the election of a United States Senator. Iowa's first two Senators had been Democrats. Augustus Caesar Dodge had been

<sup>12</sup> R. A. Smith, *A History of Dickinson County, Iowa* . . . (Des Moines, 1902), 181-2.

<sup>13</sup> Grimes to CCC, Nov. 11, 1857, *Annals of Iowa*, 22:486; Mitchell *Republican*, Jan. 14, 1858 (for make-up of House and Senate: Dubuque *Daily Times*, Nov. 5, 1857; Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Nov. 5, 12, 1857.)



replaced by Whig (later Republican) James Harlan in 1855; now a Republican legislature in Iowa had a chance to remove the other Democratic Senator, George W. Jones. Retiring Governor Grimes was spoken of most often and seemed to have the largest support not only among the legislators but throughout the state.

An impartial observer would have expected Grimes to be the unanimous choice of his party. He had been a popular governor; during his administration and under his guidance the Republican party had been organized and had now conducted two successful campaigns; and most of the minor Republican officials of the state — Carpenter among them — looked upon Grimes as the only possible choice to represent Iowa in Washington. However, as in all political parties — even new ones — strains and tensions had developed. Certain elements in the state were jealous of the position and influence of Grimes and his wing of the party. These elements offered various excuses for their opposition. The ever-popular “locality” question was agitated: most of Iowa’s chief officials were from the southern half of the state — surely the next Senator should come from the north, in justice to the claims of geography. Another argument advanced was that all Republicans elected had been former Whigs; the other elements that made up the new party — Anti-Nebraska Democrats or Free-Soilers — now felt that one of their number should have the senatorship.<sup>14</sup>

There is also evidence that some of the Republicans were restive under what they considered dictatorial elements in the party. John Teesdale, editor of the Republican *Iowa Citizen* in Des Moines, was a supporter of Grimes and himself a candidate for the position of state printer. In his columns he consistently and sanctimoniously refused to discuss the senatorial question or to publish articles written by others. Two Republicans, writing under the pseudonym “Iowa,” submitted their rejected comments to the Democratic editor of the Des Moines *Iowa State Journal* who, always ready to contribute to Republican disaffection, published them. The *Journal*’s editor, William Porter, strongly opposed any “gagging” of the press, while “Iowa” compared Teesdale’s action to the dictatorship of Louis Napoleon. Everybody knew, Editor Porter chimed in, that Teesdale was

<sup>14</sup> Dan Elbert Clark, *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1912), 114. See also David S. Sparks, “The Birth of the Republican Party in Iowa, 1848 to 1860” (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1951. Microfilm copy in State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City), 161-2.

"owned, body, soul and breeches, by one of the candidates for U. S. Senator," that he was "under the pay and committed to the fortunes of one of the candidates."<sup>15</sup>

Granting the political animus of the Democratic paper, there would still seem to be some evidence of a certain lack of harmony within Republican ranks. For many years the existence of what came to be known as the "Des Moines Ring" or the "Des Moines Regency" was the cause of many intra-party fights. The struggle for the senatorship in 1858 was one of the first of these squabbles.

Carpenter, as a freshman legislator, was only on the outskirts of this fight, but he felt the repercussions. On November 1 he had written to Grimes, asking for a report on the Des Moines River Improvement lands. In his reply Grimes discussed the various problems facing the state, assured Carpenter that "we shall not allow you to be ejected from your seat," should Duncombe try to contest the election, and closed with the statement — hardly a surprise to Carpenter — that "Perhaps you are aware that I am a candidate for the Senate in lieu of Gen Jones," adding that he would be pleased if Carpenter could support him. Carpenter, who admired Grimes tremendously, undoubtedly answered with the proper assurances, as he did to Secretary of State Elijah Sells, who wrote on November 17, also asking Carpenter's support for the retiring governor.<sup>16</sup>

The second issue that claimed Carpenter's attention, in the months before the legislature met, was one that plagued him for most of the years of his political life. This was the question of the disposal of the lands along the Des Moines River, originally granted to the state by Congress in 1846 for improvements on the river to increase its navigability. The state had at first appointed a board to administer the lands, but in 1853 the grant had been transferred to the Des Moines Navigation and Railroad Company. Very little had been accomplished by way of "improving" the river, either by the state board or by the new company, with the exception of a few dams. By 1857, with the railroads moving into Iowa, interest in river navigation waned, and various railroad interests were clamoring for a transfer

<sup>15</sup> Des Moines *Tri-Weekly Citizen*, Jan. 12, 1858; Des Moines *Tri-Weekly Journal*, Jan. 15, 18, 20, 1858. These tri-weekly papers were special editions, published during the sessions of the General Assembly.

<sup>16</sup> Grimes to CCC, Nov. 11, 1857, *Annals of Iowa*, 22:485-7; Elijah Sells to CCC, Nov. 17, 1857, *Carpenter Papers*.



of the remaining lands of the grant to them. In addition to this contest, there was considerable doubt as to the exact extent of the grant, owing to the faulty wording of the original act. Some claimed the lands extended only from the mouth of the Des Moines to the Racoon Forks at Des Moines, while others, particularly in the counties north of Des Moines, insisted that the grant extended northward to the Minnesota border.<sup>17</sup> Whatever the extent of the grant, several railroads wanted it, in particular the Dubuque & Pacific, the road in which Senator Jones and John F. Duncombe were most interested, and the road which, according to Grimes, had worked against Carpenter's election because of his declared position in favor of granting the lands to a proposed north-south line along the river—the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota Railroad. Aside from a desire for the land grant, the east-west railroads were also determined to stop a north-south line which would be a trade rival for the products of the Iowa farmers.<sup>18</sup>

Carpenter's district, the 13th, favored the transfer of the lands to the north-south railroad, rather than to any of the east-west lines that had already profited by the 1856 railroad land grant. On December 19, 1857, the citizens of Fort Dodge held a meeting "for the purpose of memorializing the Legislature of the state upon the subject of the Des Moines River grant." Resolutions were adopted, asking that the lands be granted "for the construction of a Railroad from the city of Keokuk on the Mississippi river through the Des Moines valley, said Railroad to be co-extensive in length with said land grant." The committee which drew up the resolutions consisted of Carpenter, Charles B. Richards, Samuel Rees, John M. Stockdale, and Robert K. Wilson.<sup>19</sup> On the day of the meeting Carpenter wrote to Iowa's representatives in Washington, asking their support for the transfer of the congressional land grant to this projected road. Senator Harlan answered cordially, promising his support; Timothy Davis of Dubuque, Representative from Iowa's second district, promised "any Service in my power to divert the Grant to a more useful and patriotic purpose. . . ." <sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Roscoe L. Lokken, *Iowa Public Land Disposal* (Iowa City, 1942), 210-19.

<sup>18</sup> Grimes to CCC, Nov. 30, 1857, *Annals of Iowa*, 22:488-9; Sparks, "Birth of Republican Party in Iowa . . .," 187.

<sup>19</sup> Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Dec. 24, 1857.

<sup>20</sup> James Harlan (Dec. 29, 1857) and Timothy Davis (Dec. 31, 1857) to CCC, *Carpenter Papers*.

There is no record of Representative Curtis' reply, but he probably sided with his Republican colleagues. Naturally, help was not solicited or expected from Senator Jones.

With the ball rolling on the Des Moines River grant project, and with his position as a Grimes man fully established, Carpenter departed early in January of 1858 for Des Moines, "a little shabby frontier town of less than 3,000 inhabitants."<sup>21</sup> It took two days to make the journey by stagecoach from Fort Dodge to the new capital city. Hoyt Sherman, a Des Moines banker whose brother William Tecumseh would soon win fame in the Civil War, had arranged rooms for Carpenter at the home of Willson Alexander Scott on the east side of the river near the new statehouse, "at \$8 per week." Most of the hotels on the west side charged as much as \$2.00 per day, Sherman explained, and although they would furnish "Omnibuses or Carriages to the Capitol," they would probably charge extra for such service. The quarters at Scott's would be "first rate," he assured Carpenter.<sup>22</sup>

The space between the river and the capitol was a muddy swamp, although it had been marked out in streets, lots, and alleys in the optimistic days before the crash of 1857 had called a halt to real estate booms. But the people of Des Moines tried to make up for the shortcomings of their little town by a lavish hospitality — at least as lavish as the frontier could afford. On the west side, at the "only hotel of much pretensions" — the Demoine House — stagecoaches daily "deposited the members, strangers, and gentlemen of the 'Third House' [lobbyists], as they came to the new capital on their various missions." There Governor Grimes had rooms, and Ralph P. Lowe awaited his inauguration, and the "soft coal stoves glowed with a red heat" to welcome the shivering passengers who had ridden for long hours "through the great snow drifts that filled the sloughs and ravines" of the primitive roads surrounding the capital.<sup>23</sup>

Among the thirty-six Senators and seventy-two Representative who made up the Seventh General Assembly of Iowa were many men who would later make their mark in state and nation. There were two future governors:

<sup>21</sup> B. F. Gue, "The Seventh General Assembly," *Pioneer Lawmakers Association of Iowa. Reunion of 1898* (Des Moines, 1898), 87. The population of Des Moines was probably closer to 4,000, since the census of 1856 gave the town's population as 3,830. *Iowa Historical and Comparative Census, 1836-1880*, 564.

<sup>22</sup> Hoyt Sherman to CCC, Dec. 2, 1857, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>23</sup> Gue, "The Seventh General Assembly," 88.

Samuel J. Kirkwood and Cyrus C. Carpenter; two lieutenant-governors: Benjamin F. Gue and Nicholas J. Rusch; and a Senator, James F. Wilson of Fairfield. Many future Congressmen were also starting their political careers in 1858. The clerk of the House was twenty-two-year-old William P. Hepburn, whose long career in Congress made him one of the best-known of Iowans. There were, in addition, two future cabinet members: William W. Belknap, Grant's Secretary of War, who resigned in disgrace; and George W. McCrary, Secretary of War under Rutherford B. Hayes. Kirkwood would also serve as a Senator and as Secretary of the Interior under Garfield and Arthur. There was J. B. Grinnell, who had founded the town and college of that name, and who later joined forces with the Liberal Republicans. Samuel E. Rankin was serving in the House; his "defalcation" when State Treasurer during Carpenter's first gubernatorial administration would cause the latter no end of embarrassment.<sup>24</sup> In the Senate there was Alvin Saunders of Henry County, later to become territorial governor of Nebraska and a United States Senator from that state.

The leader of the Democrats in the House, Dennis Mahony, former editor of the *Dubuque Express and Herald*, was only thirty-seven in 1858, but because of a palsy that caused his head to shake, he appeared much older. "When he rose to speak," Carpenter wrote years later, "he stood with the tips of the fingers of both hands touching the desk before him. He never made a gesture, but just talked with an accuracy of diction and a force of logic which always gave him the undivided attention of House."<sup>25</sup>

The statehouse, where the legislature assembled on January 11, 1858, was a three-story brick building, 56x100 feet, erected at a cost of about \$40,000 by a group of East Des Moines businessmen known as the Capitol Building Association. It stood south of the present Capitol Square, on the site now occupied by the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. This was then known as "Scott's Addition," a real estate development of Carpenter's

<sup>24</sup> For the membership of the Seventh General Assembly, see *House Journal, 1858, 5; Senate Journal, 1858, 3-4; Mitchell Republican, Jan. 14, 1858; Des Moines Tri-Weekly Citizen, Jan. 28, 1858.*

<sup>25</sup> C. C. Carpenter, "Reminiscences of the Winter of 1858 in Des Moines," *Pioneer Lawmakers Association of Iowa. Reunion of 1892* (Des Moines, 1893), 53-63. The *Dubuque Herald* was established in 1851; in 1854 it was consolidated with the *Miners' Express* and became the *Express and Herald*, with Mahony one of the editors. Mahony retired from the paper in 1855, but in 1860 the old name of *Herald* was resumed, and Mahony returned as editor and owner. See David C. Mott, "Early Iowa Newspapers . . .," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 16:178-9 (January, 1928).



landlord, W. A. Scott. The first and second floors of the statehouse were divided into offices for the state officials, the Supreme Court, and the State Library, while the third floor contained the House and Senate chambers.<sup>26</sup> Here, in this modest structure, Iowa's government was carried on for twenty-six years. When, during the session of the Twentieth General Assembly in 1884 the legislature, with due ceremony, moved into the present capitol, one of the leading members would be Iowa's elder statesman — Cyrus Clay Carpenter.

In 1858 the young legislator was not the wise politician of 1884. Twenty-six years would not dim his idealism, but it would harden him to the ways of politics. In 1858, however, Carpenter's first contact with "practical politics" was something of a shock. He wrote to Kate Burkholder (his future wife) in Fort Dodge:

Well for one week I have been in the legislature and I find that it is no such great thing after all. There is something about every thing done in this place cold and formal and designing. After all I had rather spend an hour with good warm hearted friends than to meet with business committees and prepare the cold formalities of legislation. You will perceive by the newspapers that I keep doing something tho' I believe my ambitious ardor will begin to cool down a little after I have seen a little more of the sad selfishness of legislation. The usual excitement and turmoil incident to the election of a U S Senator now agitates the Gen Assembly and I almost fear that Gov Grimes is going to be sacrificed on the altar of some other mans selfishness. While I am writing to you, in the adjoining room I hear half a dozen men concurring and attempting to concoct a plan whereby they can secure the defeat of Grimes. And when I think of the base schemes they are willing to resort to in order to defeat the man who has done more for the Republican party and our State than any other man living, my very heart sickens at the name of politics.<sup>27</sup>

Carpenter had also written to his friend, Major William Williams, the founder of Fort Dodge, in the same vein. The Major wrote him with an air of fatherly if cynical wisdom:

<sup>26</sup> For descriptions of the Old Brick Capitol, as it came to be known, see H. B. Turrill, *Historical Reminiscences of the City of Des Moines . . .* (Des Moines, 1857), 86; H. W. Lathrop, "The Capitals and Capitols of Iowa," *Iowa Historical Record*, 4:111-12 (July, 1888); Jacob A. Swisher, "The Capitols at Des Moines," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 39:52-7 (January, 1941). For a contemporary description, see *Dubuque Daily Times*, Jan. 7, 1858.

<sup>27</sup> CCC to Kate Burkholder, Jan. 15, 1858, *Carpenter Papers*.

I have no doubt as you say there will be a great deal of fuggleing among the polititians [*sic*]. Which to you will be very tiresome — but you must put into the puddle with the crowd and learn to know that politics of the present day is but a game & he that plays his hand best will come out best — you must learn to do as you would in a game of *Uchre* — know when to *Stand* your hand and when to *pass*.<sup>28</sup>

The efforts to halt the Grimes nomination were most disturbing to Carpenter. Traditionally, the party caucuses to name candidates for the senatorship were held almost as soon as the legislature had organized. But Grimes's opponents waged a campaign of delay in order to marshal the forces against him, and repeated caucuses were held before an agreement was finally reached. True to its campaign of silence — the Democrats called it censorship — the Republican *Iowa Citizen* made no mention of the political maneuverings behind the scenes at Des Moines. The Democratic *Journal*, however, lost no opportunity to jibe at the Republican factions who were delaying the vote. In his letter to Kate Burkholder on January 15, Carpenter mentioned that he had just returned from "an exciting caucus of the Republican members of the Legislature." The *Journal* described this caucus in more detail:

The Republican members of the Legislature, together with the candidates, and the members of the "Third House," have a good time of it in caucusing together. The members had had a number of meetings, but brotherly love will not prevail, and the meetings so far have not answered the question as to "who shall be U. S. Senator?" On Friday evening [January 15] a caucus was held, and as we learn from our special messenger, some nice sparring in a quiet way was the result. A motion to proceed to balloting as soon as possible for a candidate for Senator was promptly negatived, and afterwards it was agreed to hold a caucus this evening for the purpose of deciding *when* the nomination should be made. . . . Grimes and his friends want to go into a nominating caucus immediately, but his opponents are determined to delay it as much as possible. While every day Grimes is losing strength, the opposition are gaining, and organizing and harmonizing their forces. The Ex-Governor's chances are growing beautifully less and smaller by degrees, and the arrogant tone adopted by himself and friends now begins to quaver with the fear of approaching defeat.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Major William Williams to CCC, Jan. 16, 1858, *ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> Des Moines *Tri-Weekly Iowa Journal*, Jan. 18, 1858.



A reporter of the Dubuque *Herald* held the opposite position. He commented on January 13 that "the opponents of Gov. Grimes for the Senatorship are doing their utmost to put off the day of election with the hope of defeating him," but the reporter was sure they would not succeed.<sup>30</sup>

At last, when the rebel faction was unable to delay longer or to develop a winning combination against Grimes, the Republicans caucused on Monday, January 25, fourteen days after the legislature had met, and nominated James W. Grimes for the Senate, to succeed George W. Jones. Grimes received thirty-eight of the sixty-two votes cast on the first formal ballot, and his election was at once declared unanimous. His unsuccessful opponents were James Thorington of Davenport, Judge William Smyth of Linn County, and Timothy Davis of Dubuque. Other serious contenders, especially Fitz Henry Warren of Burlington, William Penn Clarke of Iowa City, and F. E. Bissell of Dubuque (whom Grimes had earlier expected to show the greatest strength against him), had dropped out of the contest.<sup>31</sup> Grimes reported his success to his wife:

I have just been nominated by the Republican caucus for United States Senator, for six years from March 4, 1859. I received the nomination on the first ballot, by five majority. My vote would have been much larger, and nearly unanimous, on the second ballot — as many voted for persons in their own counties on the first ballot by way of compliment, who would have voted for me on the second ballot, and for me on the first had their votes been necessary.

The closing words, "had their votes been necessary," indicate that the Grimes forces had things well in hand, and that all plots against them had failed.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Dubuque *Express and Herald*, Jan. 17, 1858.

<sup>31</sup> Clark, *Senatorial Elections in Iowa*, 117-18; Des Moines *Tri-Weekly Journal*, Jan. 27, 1858. Grimes had earlier written CCC: "My principle [sic] competitor will be Mr. Bissell of Du Buque. He runs on the geography question. I understand him to be a very good man but he is a man I have never even seen." Grimes to CCC, Nov. 11, 1857, *Annals of Iowa*, 22:486. Grimes also believed that Bissell was backed by the Dubuque & Pacific RR. Sparks, "Birth of the Republican Party in Iowa . . .," 162.

<sup>32</sup> Grimes to Mrs. Grimes, Jan. 25, 1858, in William Salter, *The Life of James W. Grimes* . . . (New York, 1876), 113. Further evidence that Grimes was sure of his nomination appeared in a letter of Feb. 15, 1858, to Elihu Washburne of Illinois: ". . . there was not enough of a contest about it to entitle it to the dignity of that name — a few men made a great deal of noise and resorted to a great many base devices to compass my defeat, but there was no time in the contest when I was not

The Democrats, who had been watching the Republican fight from the sidelines, met and named Benjamin M. Samuels of Dubuque — a purely honorary nomination, since the majority of Republicans in the legislature made the election of Grimes by that body a mere formality, once the caucus had reached agreement.<sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, the work of the legislature progressed, interspersed with the festivities incident to a new government. The citizens of Des Moines had entertained the members of the legislature in what Carpenter called "a whole-souled western 'blow-out.'" The inauguration ball was "a great 'scrounge,'" but the inauguration itself was, to the idealistic young man, "a solemn and impressive ceremony."<sup>34</sup> On the evening of January 25, complying with tradition, Senator-elect Grimes entertained at the Demoine House. He described the occasion to his wife:

There were one hundred and seventy-eight guests. All the rival candidates were present. The best feeling prevailed. The only drawback was the laudations of me by the speakers. They were Governor Lowe, Lieutenant-Governor Faville, Hon. Lincoln Clark, Finch, Grinnell, and others. I inclose a bill of fare. It was got up, as you see, on temperance principles. Every one says that he never attended a more harmonious, well-conducted, or sumptuous feast.<sup>35</sup>

All was not feasting and parties, however. In the brick capitol the formalities of legislation and the informalities of party strife went forward as usual. The opening days of the legislature were taken up not only with the senatorial contest, but with the discussion of a resolution dealing with the government of Kansas. The Iowa legislature, of course, had nothing to do with the admission of another state into the Union, but the whole nation had been stirred by antislavery, "Bleeding Kansas," and the Dred Scott Decision, and now by the efforts to make Kansas a slave state under the sure of fifty-five of the sixty-four [*sic*. There were only 63 Republicans in the Assembly, of whom 62 voted in the caucus] republican votes. . . ." Quoted in Sparks, "Birth of the Republican Party in Iowa . . .," 168.

<sup>33</sup> Clark, *Senatorial Elections in Iowa*, 118. For the career of Samuels, see Owen Peterson, "Ben Samuels in the Democratic National Convention of 1860," *Iowa Journal of History*, 50:225-32 (July, 1952).

<sup>34</sup> Carpenter, "Reminiscences of the Winter of 1858 in Des Moines," 55; CCC to Kate Burkholder, Jan. 15, 1858, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>35</sup> Grimes to Mrs. Grimes, Jan. 26, 1858, in Salter, *Life of James W. Grimes* . . ., 113-14.

Lecompton Constitution. Such was the widespread agitation over these issues that mere "localisms" were forced into the background in the northern states. Certainly this was the case in Iowa, where most of the candidates for the General Assembly had campaigned on national issues — as had Carpenter — in spite of efforts of the Democrats to introduce state problems into the discussions.

On January 19 John W. Rankin of Lee County introduced into the Senate a "Preamble and Joint Resolution" condemning the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution. The two Iowa Senators were "instructed" and the two Congressmen (Samuel R. Curtis of Keokuk and Timothy Davis of Dubuque) were "requested" to oppose the admission of Kansas; furthermore, the Senators were "requested" to resign "unless they can support the foregoing resolves." This latter was, of course, directed against Senator George W. Jones. In addition, the resolution was an effort to force the Democratic members of both houses of the legislature to defend an unpopular measure.

In the Senate, however, the Democrats refused to debate the issue at all. Senator Rankin delivered a long speech favoring his resolution. At its close, a deep silence fell upon the chamber. Republicans stirred restlessly, waiting for some Democrat to rise in rebuttal. "The Democratic Senators," reported an editor, "sat behind their desks smiling complacently upon the uneasiness of their Republican friends, and displaying no intention of replying to the lengthy speech just delivered." When taunted by the Republicans in an effort to anger them into debate, the Democrats still refused to answer. Frustrated in their attempt to start a rousing fight, the Republicans surrendered and allowed the resolution to come to a vote, when of course it was passed on a strict party basis.

In the House, on the same day, the Democratic members were not so reticent. Mahony offered a substitute which was voted down by the majority. When the printed record appeared the following day, there was no mention of Mahony's proposal; in fact, the only space given to the whole debate was the following: "At four o'clock and 30 minutes the committee [of the whole] rose, and by its Chairman, reported the resolutions back without amendment and recommended their passage." When Mahony protested this omission, the Speaker replied that it was "in accordance with parliamentary rule and the usage of this House," and his decision was sustained. Needless to say, Democratic editor William Porter made the most



of this "Tyranny of the Majority" in the columns of his paper. With the exception of this argument, the resolutions passed both houses, by a party vote in each case, without setting off the fireworks the Republicans had expected and intended.<sup>36</sup> A note of warning was sounded, however, when Lincoln Clark of Dubuque announced in the House, immediately after the vote, that he would "on tomorrow or some future day, present a protest against the passage" of the resolution.<sup>37</sup> Several weeks passed, and nothing further was heard from Mr. Clark.

The subject was not closed, however. On February 17, catching the Republican majority unawares, twenty-two Democrats, headed by Lincoln Clark, introduced a "Protest" and moved that it be "spread upon the Journals of this House."<sup>38</sup> The ensuing debate resulted in such a parliamentary tangle, with motion following motion, with demands for the previous question, with points of order raised, that finally even the Speaker had lost all hold over the proceedings. "Several appeals were made to the good sense of the House to put an end to these disgraceful proceedings," reported Editor Porter. "The House at the time, had no 'good sense,' or if it had it had forgotten its possession of that enviable qualification; so no one would withdraw his motion or call." When at last a vote was reached, as to whether the protest could be entered in the Journal, only eight voted against its inclusion. Dennis Mahony promptly gave notice that he would "at some future day" present a protest against both the original resolution and the protest of his fellow-Democrats. With that, the House adjourned.<sup>39</sup>

An anticlimax came the next morning. Overnight Clark had studied his law and had found that the whole controversy was unnecessary, since any member could enter a protest in the Journal without a vote of the House.<sup>40</sup>

Of more significance, as indicating the trend within the Democratic party, was the "Protest," signed by Dennis Mahony and four other Democrats, which was entered on the Journal without comment.<sup>41</sup> These two Democratic pronouncements were an indication of the growing split in the

<sup>36</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1858, 81, 82-3, 84, 90, 93, 96, 103, 105, 108; *House Journal*, 1858, 104-105, 108; *Des Moines Tri-Weekly Journal*, Jan. 22, 27, 1858.

<sup>37</sup> *House Journal*, 1858, 108.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 311-14.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 314-17; *Des Moines Tri-Weekly Journal*, Feb. 19, 1858.

<sup>40</sup> *Des Moines Tri-Weekly Journal*, Feb. 19, 1858.

<sup>41</sup> *House Journal*, 1858, 322-5.



party — a split which would eventually lead to the defeat of 1860. The Republican Resolution had, aside from opposing the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, condemned the President and all others in the government who had consented to that constitution. Clark and his Democratic group objected to this condemnation, claiming that the General Assembly of Iowa had “no jurisdiction in law over the President of the United States,” and no power or right to condemn Senators of other states for their actions. Then followed the statement to which Mahony and his four associates took exception: Clark had, in effect, agreed with the Republicans that there was something very wrong with the adoption of the Lecompton Constitution in Kansas, that the people did not have a chance to “pass their judgment” upon it, and therefore Congress had the right to “go behind the Constitution” as presented and inquire into its legality. Mahony, on the other hand, took the extreme position that the people of Kansas had the right to delegate their powers to their state legislature, and that Congress had no right to “go behind the Constitution” as presented to them by the duly constituted power of the people of Kansas.<sup>42</sup> Thus were the lines drawn, not only between Republican and Democrat, but between Democrat and Democrat.

This conflict within the Democratic party of Iowa was a reflection of the larger battle going on in Washington between the followers of Stephen A. Douglas, who opposed the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, and those who stood behind President Buchanan in his insistence that the provisions for voting on the Kansas document should stand. The “Little Giant” from Illinois was waging a valiant fight to wrest control of his party from the President — known as “Old Obliquity” — and the Southern Democrats. “By God, Sir, I made Mr. James Buchanan,” Douglas said, “and by God, Sir, I will unmake him.”<sup>43</sup> The result was the ill-fated geographical split among the Democrats, with Northerners following Douglas, and Southerners supporting Buchanan. In Iowa every Democratic paper except the Dubuque *Northwest* rallied behind the Illinois Senator. Lincoln Clark and his supporters were of this wing of the Democratic party, while

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 311-13, 322-5.

<sup>43</sup> George Fort Milton, *The Eve of Conflict: Stephen A. Douglas and the Needless War* (New York, 1934), 273. For the break of the Democrats over Lecompton, see also Roy Franklin Nichols, *The Disruption of American Democracy* (New York, 1948), 117-31; John Bach McMaster, *A History of the People of the United States...* (8 vols., New York, 1914), 8:303-316.

Mahony and his four colleagues stood behind the President. The *Dubuque Express and Herald*, formerly edited by Mahony, was a Douglas paper; its attacks on the rival *Northwest* were quite as virulent as those traditional between Democrats and Republicans. The *Northwest* editor, in the opinion of the *Express and Herald*, was "base hearted and unprincipled," "an imported scavenger of political filth," "a poor nincompoop."<sup>44</sup> In the face of this violence of language, it is not surprising to find that the *Herald* found no room in its columns for a report of the Mahony protest, which supported the administration's position. Mahony was taking a stand different from that of his one-time associates; therefore, rather than attack him personally, they chose to ignore him. A further indication of the state of flux in which the Democratic party found itself is that in 1860 Mahony, again editor of the *Herald*, would become a strong "Douglas Democrat," in contrast to his position in 1858.

National issues occupied only a small part of the time of the General Assembly, in spite of the excitement over the Lecompton question. Probably the most important legislation before the Seventh General Assembly was the enacting of Iowa's first banking laws. Iowa's 1846 constitutional convention, dominated by anti-bank Democrats, had succeeded in prohibiting any banks of issue in the new state. The Constitutional Convention of 1857, with changing times and changing party emphasis, had provided for the legalizing of banks in the state, though not until after a considerable struggle with the Democratic members.<sup>45</sup> Even then, Governor Grimes in his farewell message, warned the legislators of the General Assembly "that banks are to be established to secure the *public welfare* and not to promote the purposes of the stockholders and capitalists, and that it is far better that banks should realize small profits, than that the public should be liable to injury by their suspension or failure."<sup>46</sup>

The result was a "Free Banking Bill" so complicated and involved that no bank was ever established under it; in 1870 the law was repealed. The legislature of 1858 seemed satisfied with its work, however, since the bill

<sup>44</sup> *Dubuque Express and Herald*, March 4, 1858.

<sup>45</sup> Constitution of 1846, Article 9, in Benjamin F. Shambaugh (ed.), *Documentary Material Relating to the History of Iowa* (3 vols., Iowa City, 1895-1901), 1:205; Constitution of 1857, Article 8, *ibid.*, 244.

<sup>46</sup> Benjamin F. Shambaugh (ed.), *The Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa* (7 vols., Iowa City, 1903-1905), 2:45. See also Howard H. Preston, *History of Banking in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1922), 70-82.

passed the House by a vote of 40 to 25, the Senate by a vote of 23 to 5. Those in opposition were largely Democrats, but there were a few Republicans among them. P. B. Bradley, a Democrat of Jackson County, had the last word in the House: immediately after the bill's passage, he moved an amendment to the title of the bill, substituting the word "swindling" for "banking." Needless to say, his motion lost.<sup>47</sup>

The bill to establish a "State Bank and branches" was introduced into the Senate, where it was debated, off and on, for about four weeks before passage by a vote of 28 to 4; the House concurred, with a slight amendment, 45 to 18. Carpenter, as a loyal Republican, voted with the majority in the House. Both bills were accepted by an overwhelming majority of the voters at an election on June 28.<sup>48</sup>

Banks and railroads were both exciting topics of conversation and legislation during 1858. But while tangled financial arguments for and against banks may have confused many voters, there was no mystery about a railroad. It was something that every town wanted; every county was willing to vote aid to a prospective railroad; every legislature besieged Congress with petitions for larger land grants. Iowa's first railroad land grant had come in 1856, but ten years before that date Congress had granted lands in the Des Moines River valley for the "improvement" of the river. By 1858 the four east-west railroads that had benefited by the 1856 federal grant were building into the state as fast as local aid and eastern financiers made it possible. The southernmost — the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad — had reached Mount Pleasant from its starting point at Burlington, and was now nearing Fairfield. The Mississippi & Missouri Railroad had completed its main line from Davenport to Iowa City, had pushed branches southwest to Muscatine and Washington, and was trying to get construction under way west of Iowa City. The Iowa Central Air Line Railroad, starting from Clinton, was pushing toward Clarence, some forty miles away. To the north, the Dubuque & Pacific had reached only across Dubuque County to Dyersville in its race for the far Pacific. With east-west roads assured, Iowans turned their attention to north-south lines, and the one that attracted the most attention in the spring of 1858 was the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota, which planned to build along the Des Moines valley and wanted the unused land grant of the Des Moines Navigation Company to help

<sup>47</sup> *House Journal, 1858, 587; Preston, History of Banking in Iowa, 74-82.*

<sup>48</sup> *Preston, History of Banking in Iowa, 84.*



them do so. By 1858 the road had reached Bentonsport in Van Buren County.<sup>49</sup>

By this time it had become obvious to all that the Des Moines Navigation Company, which had taken over the task — and the land grant — of the Des Moines Valley Improvement project, was a complete failure. There was no doubt that the Seventh General Assembly would cancel its agreement with the Navigation Company and would transfer the land grant to a railroad. Webster County, as has been indicated, had already stated its preference for the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota road. When the House committee of five on the "Improvement of the Des Moines" was appointed, Carpenter of Webster County was made chairman. His Republican colleagues were Thomas Mitchell of Polk County and C. E. Millard of Warren; the Democrats were Squire Ayers of Van Buren County and Cornelius Beal of Boone.<sup>50</sup>

In response to a request from this committee, Governor Lowe on February 16 sent the House a message on the status of the Des Moines River grant, with the suggestion that a joint committee be appointed to settle with the Navigation Company. Carpenter and Belknap from the House and William Loughridge from the Senate were chosen.<sup>51</sup> That the committee was "stacked" in favor of transferring the grant to the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota Railroad is obvious, since the three members came from counties along the Des Moines valley — Carpenter from Webster, Belknap from Lee, and Loughridge from Mahaska. Mahony at once protested the Senate's choice of Loughridge, and the House agreed with him. Certain other Senators also doubted the advisability of placing Loughridge on the committee, but a compromise finally was reached by adding a fourth member, J. W. Jenkins from Jackson County.<sup>52</sup>

The real struggle within the legislature on the whole question of the lands originally granted for the improvement of the Des Moines River was

<sup>49</sup> For brief accounts of the various roads, see Mildred Throne, "The Burlington & Missouri River Railroad," *The Palimpsest*, 33:1-32 (January, 1952); Dwight L. Agnew, "Iowa's First Railroad," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 48:1-26 (January, 1950), and "The Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, 1856-1860," *ibid.*, 51:211-32 (July, 1953); *History of Clinton County, Iowa* . . . (Chicago, 1879), 491-5 (for Iowa Central Air Line RR); and Franklin T. Oldt (ed.), *History of Dubuque County, Iowa* . . . (Chicago, n. d.), 240-50 (for Dubuque & Pacific).

<sup>50</sup> *House Journal*, 1858, 60.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 304-305, 310-11.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 311; *Senate Journal*, 1858, 246, 250, 254, 256.



a geographical, rather than a political, contest, although party strife could seldom be quelled for long. Cornelius Beal, Democrat of Boone, a county through which both the east-west Iowa Central Air Line and the north-south Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota would pass, combined political hostility with a partiality for the Air Line road into an attack on the River Lands settlement in general and C. C. Carpenter in particular. This hostility finally flared into a collision — certainly verbal and possibly physical — over a debate on quite another issue, resulting in the publication of a letter by Beal in the *Des Moines Journal*, in which he accused Carpenter of lying. Rumors in Fort Dodge had it that the two had come to blows, and Kate Burkholder chided Cyrus, in true ladylike fashion: "La! Mr. Carpenter how indiscreet in you indeed to conduct so in the Hall of Representatives. Talk about command of self after this will you. . . ." <sup>53</sup> In the debate over members of the special committee for the Des Moines River settlement, Beal had tried to have W. W. Belknap, then a fellow Democrat, replaced by Horace Anthony, a Republican but a resident of Clinton County where, it must be inferred, the interests of the Air Line road would have received more support. Beal's effort in this failed, undoubtedly increasing his animosity toward the whole scheme. <sup>54</sup>

A great deal of mystery surrounds the final settlement between the state and the Navigation Company. That there were behind-the-scenes deals is fairly certain, but just what these deals were and who participated are matters of conjecture. Though two writers later stated that the Navigation Company and the Railroad Company were actually one and the same, not even a hint of this appeared at the time. <sup>55</sup> Had such been the case, surely some of the opponents of the settlement would have brought it out during the lengthy debates in both the House and Senate. Since they did not, either the allegation is false or it was a wonderfully well kept secret in 1858.

The final agreement provided that the Navigation Company should pay the state the sum of \$20,000 and should receive all of the lands of the

<sup>53</sup> Kate Burkholder to CCC, Feb. 25, 1858, *Carpenter Papers*. Beal letter in *Des Moines Tri-Weekly Journal*, Feb. 27, 1858.

<sup>54</sup> *House Journal*, 1858, 311.

<sup>55</sup> "As it afterwards developed the navigation company was really the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota Railroad Company, and instead of improving the river it had been devoting a portion of its time to the building of the railroad which, at the time of the settlement, was completed to Benton's Port, a distance of about forty

grant that had so far been certified in return for cancelling their contract. According to Governor Lowe's message to the General Assembly, the original size of the 1846 grant from Congress was 853,430 acres, of which 593,430.87 acres had been certified to the state. Of these, the state had sold 205,489.23 acres, while some 230,000 more had been transferred to the Navigation Company since it had taken over the work, leaving a total of some 37,000 acres yet to be sold.<sup>56</sup> This is only one set of figures, however. Many variations of the totals appeared during the long struggle over the lands.

The location of the lands was another point at issue, since nobody, either in the state or federal governments, could agree as to just where the grant should be located. No less than four or five different decisions had come from Washington over the years, each contradicting the preceding. Did the grant extend only to the Raccoon Forks of the Des Moines River, or did it extend to the source of that river? Several clear-cut answers had been given, only to be reversed within a year or so by a different official or a new administration. Meanwhile, squatters had moved into the area above Des Moines, locating on odd or even sections as they made their choices. Herein lay the seeds of a tragedy of errors in which the innocent victims of the shifting government decisions lost the lands which they had improved and paid for in good faith.<sup>57</sup>

The people above the Raccoon Forks looked with suspicion on the claims of the Navigation Company to their lands, since any "improvements" the Company might be effecting were far away. As early as January 20, 1858, Carpenter received an agitated letter from a constituent in Dakota City in Humboldt County north of Fort Dodge:

Our Neighbourhood has been the scene of Considerable Excitement for a few days past. A Mr Warner from Fort Demoin Purporting himself to be agent of the Demoin River Co has been up here and appointed old Billy Miller Sub agent or Rather a (Spy)

miles." N. E. Goldthwait (ed.), *History of Boone County, Iowa* (2 vols., Chicago, 1914), 1:141. This same paragraph appears in a Webster County history, published one year earlier, in a chapter credited to C. L. Lucas. H. M. Pratt, *History of Fort Dodge and Webster County, Iowa* (2 vols., Chicago, 1913), 1:236.

<sup>56</sup> *House Journal*, 1858, 304-305.

<sup>57</sup> See C. L. Lucas article, "The Des Moines River Land Grants," in Pratt, *History of Fort Dodge and Webster County, Iowa*, 1:231-7. See also Jacob A. Swisher, "The Des Moines River Improvement Project," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 35:142-80 (April, 1937).

and we are having quite a time over it. We have all made up our minds that we will pay no attention to the *damed* old Skunk he has skinned all the odd Sections about here of all the Best of the Timber and now he is turning traitor against us. We will give him *Hell* under the shirt before he gets through with it. Now Friend C. I want you to see the Gov or Sec of State . . . and ask what Decisions have been made if any. Whether the River Company have any Title or are they like to have any to the lands up here Can they do any thing with us as the thing stands Is the legislature doing any thing about the Matter. . . .<sup>58</sup>

This letter was more profane than most of the correspondence received by Carpenter on the River Land question, but all carried the same tone — do something about having the lands transferred to a railroad to be built up the Des Moines valley. Whereas the Navigation Company was completely discredited, and the giving of any lands to that company was violently opposed, yet a grant of the same lands to a railroad — as yet an unknown evil — was heartily approved. Letters and petitions “praying for a diversion” of the land grant were numerous.<sup>59</sup>

Although his constituents seemed to be of one mind as to the disposal of the land grant, Carpenter’s colleagues in the House were not nearly so unanimous. The joint committee, the officers of the Navigation Company, and the state commissioner for the lands, Edwin Manning of Keosauqua, finally reached agreement, and the result was placed before the Senate on March 10, before the House on March 15, 1858. In addition to providing for the financial and land settlement with the Navigation Company, this resolution also stipulated that the residue of the congressional grant, with the approval of Congress, should go to the Keokuk, Fort Des Moines & Minnesota Railroad to aid in building that road. Of these lands, one-fourth were to be applied to building the road above the city of Des Moines.<sup>60</sup> To the majority of the legislators, and to a majority of the people of the state, this was a logical disposition of the grant. Lands for railroad purposes were to lie along the line of the track — such had been the case with the 1856 grant. A minority of the members, however, sought to change this

<sup>58</sup> John L. Lewis to CCC, Jan. 20, 1858, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>59</sup> Carpenter presented a number of petitions to the House during the session. *House Journal*, 1858, 86, 96, 125, 207. He also received a number of private letters on the same subject: Elijah Sells (Dec. 8, 1857), Isaac Whicher (Dec. 4, 1857), S. H. Lunt (Jan. 15, 1858); Asa C. Call (Feb. 17, 1858), *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>60</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1858, 427-9.



admittedly short-lived tradition and divide the lands among certain other roads in which they may or may not have had a financial interest.

The issue was debated in the Senate for several hours on March 10. J. B. Grinnell of Poweshiek County, on the projected line of the Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, objected to the diversion of the lands to the "Des Moines Valley Railroad," as the Keokuk road was coming to be popularly called, and argued in favor of dividing the grant among other roads. Samuel J. Kirkwood of Iowa City — also on the line of the M & M — opposed the settlement, as did several others in the final vote in which a stalwart nine stood out against the diversion.<sup>61</sup>

Grinnell's argument was repeated when the resolution came up for consideration in the House on March 15. There the opponents were more vocal; they forced debate on the measure through four days of bitter controversy, voting of amendments, recommitting to the committee, and all the usual parliamentary delays. Ellsworth N. Bates of Linn County argued strenuously for a diversion of the lands to railroads throughout the state. The rights of all the people had been "outraged" by the Navigation Company, he argued, therefore all should benefit in the settlement. George W. McCrary replied that such a suggestion was "contrary to all the customs of the State heretofore," that lands had always been given to the roads "through which they run." The officials of the Navigation Company, argued W. H. Seevers of Mahaska County, were "a set of scoundrels and swindlers," but "we are in their clutches" and must accept this agreement. T. W. Jackson, representing Tama and Marshall counties, said that diversion of the lands to any road but the one in the valley would be "the grossest injustice ever done in Christendom." Not to be outdone in superlatives, Bates countered that the course proposed was "unprecedented in the annals of parliamentary tactics." Finally tempers cooled, Mahony proposed several minor amendments that were accepted, and the resolution passed with only one vote in opposition.<sup>62</sup>

One of Mahony's amendments had stipulated that the Navigation Company be given sixty days to accept the agreement. The alacrity with which the company agreed to the terms would seem to indicate that they had made a good bargain and wished to take advantage of it before the legis-

<sup>61</sup> Des Moines *Tri-Weekly Citizen*, March 11, 1858. *Senate Journal*, 1858, 430-32.

<sup>62</sup> Des Moines *Iowa Weekly Citizen*, March 17, 24, 1858. *House Journal*, 1858, 692.



lators changed their minds. The measure was signed by Governor Lowe on March 22; on April 15 the officers of the Navigation Company met in their New York offices and accepted the terms.<sup>63</sup> Meanwhile, a bill had been introduced into Congress to permit the transfer of the lands originally granted for river improvement. Moving ponderously, Congress at last agreed to the transfer to the railroad company on July 12, 1862.<sup>64</sup>

Carpenter, while serving on the joint committee for the settlement, had taken little part in the debate, except to speak out for the interests of his section, and incidentally of the north-south railroad, when he strongly opposed giving part of the lands to any road except that to be built up the Des Moines valley.<sup>65</sup> The attitude of the people "above the Raccoon Forks" was mixed as to the whole transaction. At Boone the editor of the *News* lashed out bitterly, "in the most approved billingsgate," at Carpenter and others for their stand, according to Aldrich in the *Webster City Freeman*. Aldrich advised the Boone County people to "cork up their wrath and keep their shirts on. It will be cooler by-and-bye."<sup>66</sup> According to "One of the People," writing in a Des Moines paper, much of this discontent could be traced to the Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, which wanted some of the land grant, and he warned the road to be careful or they would "raise an excitement" in Polk County that would "sweep away" the \$300,000 county loan which the road was asking.<sup>67</sup> But the rumblings and grumblings continued, and Carpenter received his share of the barbs.

Although the part Carpenter played in the River Land settlement would rise to plague him for many years, another action of the legislature in 1858 had more bearing on his immediate political future. This was a squabble in the legislature over four ranges, 27, 28, 29, and 30 west, of township 90 north. This row of four townships along the northern border of Webster County had been separated from Webster and given to Humboldt when that county was created by the Sixth General Assembly in 1857. That, at least, was the memory of the legislators and the evidence of the newspapers. However, when the act creating Humboldt was published, it failed to list "Township 90." A further complication arose from the fact

<sup>63</sup> *Report of the Register of the State Land Office, 1859* (Des Moines, 1859), 25-6.

<sup>64</sup> Lokken, *Iowa Public Land Disposal*, 221.

<sup>65</sup> Des Moines *Iowa Weekly Citizen*, March 17, 1858.

<sup>66</sup> Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, March 18, 1858.

<sup>67</sup> Des Moines *Tri-Weekly Journal*, March 19, 1858.

that between the meetings of the Sixth and Seventh General Assemblies a new constitution had been written and adopted providing that no county boundaries could be changed without a vote of the people of the counties involved. When, therefore, a bill was introduced into the Senate to correct the act of 1857 by adding the four townships known collectively as "Township 90" to Humboldt, the citizens of Webster County rose in wrath and bombarded Carpenter with letters, pleas, threats, and petitions.

Satan and his abode seemed to play a large part in the excitement, judging from the letters received. A. M. Dawley, in a letter considered by J. J. Barclay as "impertinant & uncalled for," warned Carpenter that if he did not work against the bill "all hell wont save you from the chg. [charge] of being bought." Barclay suggested that all those who were "finding fault" with Carpenter should "go to *Hell* with their opinions." J. D. Burkholder (Carpenter's future father-in-law) assured him that he had been right in his course of action, and therefore he "need not fear the combined powers of men & Devils."<sup>68</sup>

When the bill in dispute, which had passed the Senate without any dissent, came up in the House, Carpenter presented an amendment calling for an election in the counties concerned to decide the issue. His motion lost and the bill passed the House by a vote of 40 to 21. That Carpenter was right in his amendment was confirmed by the State Supreme Court in 1860, when it declared the act of 1858 void and the act of 1857, as printed, correct.<sup>69</sup> But this vindication was two years in the future; in 1858 Carpenter bore the brunt of the attack at home. Aside from the usual Democratic carping, there was a split among the Republicans, which resulted in numerous accusing letters that left Carpenter in the middle of a family quarrel. Dark and unsubstantiated hints of bribes and of shady dealings among land speculators as a background of "Town 90" were bandied about. Small wonder, then, that Carpenter returned to Fort Dodge somewhat embittered with politics.

Before that return, however, Carpenter had played his role as legislator conscientiously if quietly. Aside from the hot arguments over Lecompton

<sup>68</sup> Letters to CCC from A. M. Dawley (March 2, 1858), J. J. Barclay (March 14, 1858), and J. D. Burkholder (March 17, 1858), *Carpenter Papers*. For the boundary dispute, see Frank Harmon Garver, "Boundary History of Iowa Counties," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 7:53-4 (January, 1909).

<sup>69</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1858, 275; *House Journal*, 1858, 572-3; *Des Moines Tri-Weekly Journal*, March 12, 1858.

and the River Lands, the Seventh General Assembly had been accomplishing worthwhile and lasting, if not spectacular, work. Sparked by the enthusiasm of three young legislators — Benjamin F. Gue of Scott, Robert A. Richardson of Fayette, and Ed Wright of Cedar counties — a reluctant legislature was induced to provide for the establishment of an "Agricultural College and Farm."<sup>70</sup> This was the genesis of Iowa's famous agricultural college at Ames. Of equal importance was the long-awaited general education bill, upon which previous legislatures had had the advice of Horace Mann.<sup>71</sup> A commission was appointed to codify the laws of Iowa to conform with the new constitution of the state. An asylum for the blind was established at Vinton; the boundaries of the state's judicial districts were revised; and all the other matters, large and small, which come before a state legislature were handled with a greater or lesser degree of "politics," depending on the importance of the issue.

In all this, Carpenter played an unspectacular role. He voted with his party on party issues, with the majority on noncontroversial issues. His first term as a state legislator, like his later two terms as a Congressman, indicated that as a lawmaker he did not have the necessary fire and force to play an outstanding role. In his quiet way he made many friends; his lack of aggressiveness made few enemies. That some of his constituents were not entirely happy with his record is evident from attacks on him in the press, but since most of the anti-Carpenter papers were Democratic, that was an expected hazard of political life.

That Carpenter had not been able to secure one of the state institutions for his district left many disgruntled. Although he had tried to push a bill for the establishment of a deaf and dumb asylum "at or near Fort Dodge," an economy-minded legislature, faced with a mounting business depression, refused to consider it. During the 1857 campaign one of the "local" issues had been a demand by Webster City that their representative do something about getting an insane asylum located there, and Carpenter, in a letter to the Webster City paper in October, had promised to do what he could.<sup>72</sup> That he made no effort to fulfill this pledge, and instead worked

<sup>70</sup> Earle D. Ross, *A History of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts* (Ames, 1942), 16-21.

<sup>71</sup> Clarence Ray Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa* (5 vols., Iowa City, 1914-1920), 1:49-54.

<sup>72</sup> Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, Oct. 29, 1857.



for a state institution at Fort Dodge, did not add to his popularity in Hamilton County. This, coupled with the suspicions aroused by the River Land settlement, and the discontent over the boundaries of Humboldt County, left a cloud upon Carpenter's first venture into politics. He could get some comfort from a letter to him from Elijah Sells, secretary of state: ". . . I hope you may not find it a difficult task to induce your constituents to forget your 'Short comings' I apprehend that they will not be able to find any man that will serve them more faithfully."<sup>73</sup> But Carpenter needed more than Sells's endorsement to win again in a still strongly Democratic district.

The Seventh General Assembly adjourned on March 23, and the members scattered to their homes, some to mend their political fences, some to return to their neglected occupations. Carpenter, who had entered his first term of state service with high hopes, returned to Fort Dodge wiser in the ways of politics and anxious to improve his finances, which were in their usual precarious state. A fellow legislator, John W. Thompson of Davenport, gave him some consolation when he wrote that "to speak plainly I do not believe either you or I are dishonest enough for such life at present, however others might differ as to this." A California friend regretted that Carpenter had not found "as much fun" in the legislature as he had expected, adding that he "would to God more of those we trust to make our laws would follow your course & work in a manner which would in future leave us free from debt & the disgraceful scenes which are too often enacted therein."<sup>74</sup>

Even though Carpenter's first experience in government had not been too happy, he never could stay far from the political arena, in spite of frequent resolutions to the contrary. After an interval of gold-seeking in Colorado, three years' service in the Civil War, and two terms as Register of the State Land Office, he went on to become governor of Iowa for two terms (1872-1876)<sup>75</sup> and Congressman for two terms (1879-1883). He closed his career of office-holding by another term in the General Assembly in 1884. Carpenter's declining years were spent in that haven of retired poli-

<sup>73</sup> Elijah Sells to CCC, Apr. 8, 1858, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>74</sup> John W. Thompson (May 6, 1858) and H. H. Fassett (Apr. 15, 1858) to CCC, *ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> For Carpenter's election as governor, see Mildred Throne, "Electing an Iowa Governor, 1871: Cyrus Clay Carpenter," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 48:335-70 (October, 1950).



ticians — a postmastership. It was during this period that he performed perhaps his greatest service to the state in his role as political godfather to one of Iowa's great Senators — Jonathan Prentiss Dolliver. Although Carpenter's career was not spectacular, it was above the average in honesty and integrity, and when he died in 1898 all state offices were closed and the leading members of the government journeyed to Fort Dodge to pay him a last tribute.

## SOURCE MATERIAL OF IOWA HISTORY

[Few Midwestern newspapers of the nineteenth century could afford the luxury of a "Washington correspondent." But many Washington residents delighted in writing long chatty letters to their hometown newspapers, letters which told of the military, political, and social life of the capital. Some half-dozen Iowans sent letters, with more or less regularity, to the Des Moines *Iowa State Register* during the years of the Civil War, when more than usual interest centered in Washington. One of the most regular of these correspondents was Mrs. John A. Kasson, whose husband served the government during 1861-1865, first as the First Assistant Postmaster General in Lincoln's cabinet, and then as Representative from Iowa's fifth congressional district. Signing her letters "Miriam," Mrs. Kasson detailed the life of the capital from the woman's viewpoint, with much space devoted to fashion, social events, and moralizing on the life about her. She also described the more outstanding political events and repeated the stories and rumors of war which were current from week to week. Her letters, covering some four years, are too voluminous to reproduce in full; only those parts dealing with the lighter side of Washington life in the midst of war have been selected for publication here.—EDITOR.]

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### AN IOWA WOMAN IN WASHINGTON, D. C., 1861-1865

[October 29, 1861]

. . . Houses are being fitted for winter gayeties, rich dresses and laughing faces pass on every side, and, as in the days of the Decameron, there will always be found a merry circle to drown care in bright jest and dance, even though death and momentous crises bound their thoughtless path. Washington is perfectly thronged with strangers, every nook and corner is occupied with officers and their families, and with lookers-on at this swiftly moving Panorama of life in the Capital. The turn of each twenty-four hours, even as the turn of the kaleidoscope, brings a new combination of bright and exciting interests; the mind cannot stagnate here, and neither can it settle—one perpetual whirl of events, changing, changing all the while—tears to-day, smiles to-morrow, meetings, partings, successes and

adversities! Washington is very well, very enchanting, when youth and health throb in the pulses, but to grow old here, to die here — ah, it would be the fate of the moth in the candle! One of the novel sensations of the times is to attempt to return some lady's call, and to find a guard stationed before the door of the fair Secessionist. He will deliver your card, it is true, but you may look upon that acquaintance as ended. It is droll to see how expert in tongue-guidance many women have become, since they are often called on in a most summary manner to give an account of words unadvisedly uttered.

The keen air of Autumn has reddened the leaves of the trees, and induced the gay and fashionable to don their dashing costume, so that what with nature and art, our Avenues and Parks are more than ever gorgeous. For bright epaulettes and uniforms sparkle and shimmer in the sunlight, and pealing bands of martial music add to the effect of this display, until the eyes are dazzled, and the weary heart finds in the thought of *Vanitas*, *vanitatum*, almost a relief. The President's Mansion has been re-fitted for the winter, and Mrs. Lincoln's carefully selected wardrobe has met the approval of connoisseurs in such matters, so "they" say! and "they," as we all know, is a very important personage. . . .

The hospitals are full of sick and wounded now, and among the faithful nurses, I often hear mentioned the name of Mrs. Fales of Iowa. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Nov. 13, 1861.]

[November 18, 1861]

. . . The city now is a huge crowd, and the strivings and pushing for houses and rooms, afford a laughable contrast to the panic of last summer, when the "white feather" certainly predominated. Many families at that time rented their furnished houses for merely nominal sums, and now the demand for accommodations is so pressing, that one cannot help pitying the rueful faces of those who might have made small fortunes had they not been too readily scared by southern braggadocio, and anticipation of Jeff Davis' dread presence! The churches that were sadly empty during warm weather, are crowded to overflowing. The Rev. Dr. Butler had resigned his charge at Trinity, owing to the disaffection of his southern sympathizing parish, but this right loyal and influential minister of the gospel, has consented now to remain until Easter, and will not be willing to receive any compensation for his services, excepting the Sabbath collections. These,

however, in so large a church, I hope will not prove insufficient. The church of the Epiphany is crowded always, the fine singing being also a great attraction. The Rev. Dr. Pyne, whose loyalty is unrivaled, preaches to a full congregation, in good old St. John's. . . .

To the looker-on, Washington becomes more and more like a great fair. Amusements are now the order of the day, circuses, theatres, concerts and all kinds of recreation. A beautiful young actress, Miss Josephine Chestney, I am told, is the rising star of the theatrical world. . . .

On the avenue, some speculators have placed a telescope with the advertisement, "five cents to look at the stars, ten cents to look at the moon!" So you see money-making, and gaiety, thrive by all means, in Washington. I am sorry to see that many families intend to entertain very generally this winter. Indeed, it is no time to expend money in dress or extravagance, for the sick soldiery, and the poor, will claim every care this coming season of suffering. But as it is no affair of my own, it is worth while to criticise the "gay world" which must live its butterfly life, though it be but for a day.

. . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Nov. 27, 1861.]

[December 2, 1861]

The chill and drear look of winter is fast creeping over Washington. Fragrance from rose and honey-suckle no longer fills the air, and pealing bands but rarely now add cheer to day and night. The soldiers are working hard to render their winter quarters comfortable, and ladies are knitting socks and mending garments in order to make the volunteers well cared for during the coming season. I think every woman will have her hands full of work for months to come, what with sewing for the troops and the poor, and it is no unusual thing to hear young and old declare that last year's cloak and bonnet must serve another season, since every dollar saved from useless expenditure is a gain to some sick or suffering person. Miss Dix [Dorothea L. Dix, Superintendent of Women Nurses] informed me to-day that the soldiers are really suffering for flannel shirts, and she seemed quite annoyed that quilts instead of blankets were sent for the regiments from their friends and sympathizers. Miss Dix observed that quilts were heavy in the wagons, and contained but little warmth. She gave me a list of clothing necessary for a soldier, and if the Iowa ladies ever club together to fit out a regiment they had better allow for each man two pairs of heavy



yarn socks, two pairs of canton flannel drawers, two flannel shirts, one pair very stout shoes, and a blanket. Also, a woollen comforter to protect the mouth and throat, and two pairs of yarn mittens. I know a lady over seventy years of age who is spending all her time and much of her income in sewing and knitting for the soldiers. Ladies buy the machine knitting, which comes in long tube-shaped pieces. These they cut off to the right length of a sock, and rip open a place into which they knit the heel and toe. . . .

As I write, a crowd of men and soldiers fly pell-mell after some prisoners who have burst from the guard house. The fellows are re-captured and bound, and some are wounded in the scuffle, but all has become quiet again during the ten minutes I have laid aside my paper to observe them. The men have just been paid off, and to-day a goodly group were seen under guard, street cleaning, or standing on barrels, or log shouldering, the latter boys being so happy in their tipsiness that they perform most extraordinary passes with their billets of wood, accompanying the same with novel and agile steps on the light fantastic toe. I have to laugh right heartily at this sight, although if one pauses to reflect, it is certainly a very disgraceful one. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Dec. 11, 1861]

[January 4, 1862]

. . . It is the custom of Washington for a great many ladies to receive calls and keep open house upon Christmas day, for their lady friends as well as the gentlemen. So many families are boarding here that it is something of a treat to be entertained in a home-style; and these Christmas receptions where rich chocolate and strong coffee abound, contrast very favorably with Washington boarding house fare. . . . How the old and young darkies roll their eyes and duck their heads at you with "Chrismas giff, Massa," as you go to your breakfast, and to church, Christmas morning! Woe be to you, if you have not a pocket full of quarters, for you've no claim to "quality" in a negro's estimation if you cannot at this happy season, cross each extended black palm with silver. . . .

On New Year's day the sun shone beautifully, but the dust rose in heavy clouds along the crowded streets. Everybody went to see everybody, and the greetings of the day seemed unusually heart-felt and sincere. I am told the Iowa gentlemen were paying their respects to their friends; and I also

heard it observed by one who met them, that their State might well be proud of such a fine band of Hawkeyes. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 15, 1862]

[January 16, 1862]

. . . I hear the Band serenading the new Secretary of War [Edwin M. Stanton]. I think of this changing scene in the midst of which I live, and moralize until I find my mind perplexed and my heart discouraged. Within the same hour one is called on in Washington to listen to such opposite opinions! I sat to-day talking an hour with Gen. and Mrs. [John C.] Fremont; soon after with those who bitterly oppose them. My heart sickens. Where will all this end? Do you want to know how "Jessie" looks and seems in the midst of her trials? Whatever may be thought of him (Fremont) let every one honor the wife who so nobly shares her husband's anxieties, and stands at his side strong in love, in will, and energy, to help him to the utmost of her power. The spirit of old Col. [Thomas Hart] Benton looks out of "Jessie's" eyes. The bright flush of her cheek, the sweet play of her lips, when seconded by the clear ideas of her powerful mind, render her captivating to a remarkable degree. She has scarcely slept or rested since she came to Washington. To see her Husband vindicated, is the restless burning of her soul, and she is mistress of every statistic, every item, that can weigh for or against him, and it is easy to see by the dilated nostril and flashing eye, how wholly she believes in Fremont's integrity, and resents his accusers' charges. Ah, well I can remember when she stole from her father's house to become the bride of the man whom she has so nobly followed for better, for worse. She was so handsome and gay, and now she appears like some Roman Matron, full of dignity and high resolve. . . .

In the meantime the wheels of society roll on. The President stands, gaunt and care-worn, receiving his friends in the gilded departments of the White House. The crimson and gold tapestry, the golden cables and tassels overhang pale weary faces, sparkling, laughing faces, and shrewd, treacherous ones alike. The brazen trumpet tones peal out their heavy march, or bewildering waltz, and music and lights, crimson and gold painfully contrast with the worn look of statesmen, the discontented grumbler, or the disloyal agitator. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 29, 1862]

[February 5, 1862]

Today is "Cabinet calling" day for Ladies: That is, on every Monday the wives of the Cabinet officers receive their friends; also Mrs. McClellan [Major-General George B. McClellan] is at home on this same day. . . .

A number of years ago, Washington saw just such a dreary, rainy, muddy season as this, and it was called John Randolph's winter, because that gentleman had the curiosity to count the clear days, and there were just fifteen. Now, the Cabinet Ladies have had to receive their calls all winter on just such unpardonable mornings as this, and there is something ludicrous in the sight of long processions of carriages swimming up to the crowded doors, and something doleful in the sight of spattered silk dresses and ermine cloaks. One becomes used to everything, so the ladies laugh at mud spots and condole with each other at the envious wheels that will pay tribute!

I will invite my friends to join me in a round of calls to-day. Any three can go, only let them be prepared to sacrifice the handsome dresses they in imagination don. And now we will suppose ourselves driving off, the soft mud flying into our faces, our light gloves are already stained in the instinctive motion of wiping spatters from our eyes. But never mind, to-day we must go, if we cannot wait until next Wednesday, and trifles shall not deter us. Besides, the streets are thronged with muddy carriages like our own, and we laugh at some one still more unfortunate than ourselves, as they gather up the ruined flounces. First to Mrs. Seward's [Secretary of State William H. Seward]. The liveried colored dignitary at the door takes our card, hands it to "contraband" No. 2, who passes it to No. 3, who places it in the silver card-receiver, at the same moment ushering us in (names clearly pronounced), to the presence of Mrs. Seward. Here we are gently and sweetly welcomed, and "contraband" No. 4 hands chocolate and cake immediately. We find the parlors already filled, and having said our few words of greeting, we make our bow and return to the carriage. Here we all eagerly discuss the call, unite in approval of everything, and have our cards in readiness for the next reception. This will be Mrs. Caleb Smith's [Secretary of the Interior Caleb B. Smith], and we find there an elegantly set table, salads and all good things, and while on our way to Mrs. Welles' [Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles] we decide that this was a very pleasant visit. While Mrs. Welles is making us quite at home in her friendly manner, we take a good look at the Navy people who sur-

round us, and conclude afterwards that Cabinet calling is right pleasant work, for the wives of Naval officers are proverbially gracious and courteous of demeanor. The crowd rolls on, and we with it. We take a glass of wine at Mrs. Blair's [Postmaster General Montgomery Blair], admire the queenly dignity of Miss Chase [daughter of Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase], enjoy a delightful talk with the kindly family of Mrs. Bates [Attorney General Edward Bates], and then drive on to pay our respects to Mrs. McClellan and Mrs. Stanton [Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton]. The latter is very handsome, and receives her friends with easy dignity. — But we linger at Mrs. McClellan's loth to leave the pleasant parlors, the bright conversation, and the brilliant assemblage. No refreshments are here — the crowd is too great to admit them, but every one asks to see the baby, which is a *real* baby, a Daughter of the Regiment, and little Miss McClellan coos and laughs at her mother's guests, and gets more kisses than usually fall to the share of so young a lassie, while the old nurse laughs and cries, "and isn't she a lovely daughter of the Regiment?" We have been all through our Cabinet calls in a little while. We have enjoyed them so that we are not cross at the mud stains, and agree that our Republican Cabinet can boast of very lovely ladies to represent the Women of America.

Now for one or two evening receptions. These are most pleasant of all. The dress required for the occasion is very simple, just what one chooses, and the society drawn together is delightful. On Thursday evening Speaker [Galusha] Grow receives. Here we find a large crowd of Senators and Members and their wives. The old ladies vie with one another in point laces; the young ones dress as they please, a simple white waist and silk skirt and corsage being the most approved style. Here we have music, and coffee, and conversation. Gen. Fremont and Lady, Gen. [Nathaniel] Banks, everybody in so-called "society" attends the receptions of Mr. Grow. No meetings can be more informal or more agreeable, and although Mr. Grow is a Bachelor, his sister-in-law does the honors of the house most charmingly. . . .

To-night Mrs. Seward gives a large party, and next week Mrs. Lincoln does the same. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, Feb. 19, 1862]



[February 20, 1862]

. . . The *Herald* and *Tribune* told of Mrs. Lincoln's great party, but the prettiest ladies there were not mentioned, even "Jessie's" presence was not spoken of, and many other interesting items were ignored, quite rightly too, for what is the use of telling everything, when some things are forgotten? The President and his Lady were anxious in the midst of the festivities, for their little son was ailing. A physician constantly came to Mrs. Lincoln's side to re-assure her with regard to the boy. To-day it is thought the little fellow must die, and very heavy are the hearts in the house so recently the house of feasting, so soon, it may be, to turn to the house of mourning. . . .

Feb. 21 — Last night at a large and brilliant party I found myself moralizing, and I will tell you why! The guests assembled were nearly the same as those who lately met under the White House roof at the recent festivity held there. The band played stirring music, the dancers flew hither and thither, and through the hall there stole from one to the other the whisper "Mrs. Lincoln's child is dead!" Did any pause to think of that desolated dwelling? Did any give a tear of sympathy? Alas! the laugh was just as loud, the dance as giddy, while [in] my own heart rung again and yet again the words, "better the house of mourning!" . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, March 5, 1862]

[March 5, 1862]

To-day the Ladies of the Cabinet declined receiving calls as a token of respect to Mrs. Lincoln. The White House is sad and still, for its joy and light have fled with little Willie. He was a very bright child, remarkably precocious for his age, and had endeared himself to every one who knew him. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln are very affectionate and devoted parents, and their devotion to the sick child was untiring. . . . Mrs. Lincoln has of course been the subject of criticism, for what lady in high social position can escape it! But she is possessed of great firmness of character, and has gone on doing what seemed to her best under all circumstances, and of course, while some are pleased to find fault. But I have never yet heard of any other than amiable traits in Mrs. Lincoln, and she certainly appears with ease and elegance as the Lady of our President. I think the Secesh ladies here were positively vexed that we did not have an awkward, ill-dressed representative of Republican Ladies, and Mrs. Lincoln's fine deport-

ment and handsome toilette have taken the "F. F. V.'s" somewhat by surprise. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Mar. 19, 1862]

[March 12, 1862]

. . . Lent has put very little stop to the gaities. A pretty lady told me that when she comes to Washington, she puts her conscience in her pocket. I warned her to beware of pick-pockets for that conscience was an article easily lost here, and not to be recovered for the "no questions asked." But while our clergy are so intensely fashionable at the Capital, who can blame the laity? . . .

The day before Ash Wednesday, Miss Chase gave a very brilliant matinee. The ladies went in opera bonnets and spring costumes. The band played finely and a beautiful collation and plenty of flowers were at the disposition of the guests. The evening of the same day Mrs. Welles gave a brilliant party. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Mar. 26, 1862]

[April 10, 1862]

Ho! for Fortress Monroe! for Newport News! for Hampton Roads! for a good time generally! The *King Philip* lies at the Navy Yard, a Government boat at our service. A few hours to get ready, a few cart loads of good things to eat, drink and be merry withal (got up at private expense), a large party of ladies and gentlemen, statesmen and literati, among whom were Vice President [Hannibal] Hamlin and family, many Senators, Representatives, and distinguished persons! The deck is crowded with happy faces, and with loud cheers we start for glorious Old Point, though the snow begins to fall and in an hour or so we are all compelled to retreat to close cabins, dependent on the goddess of good humor for our main solace. But maugre wind and rain, maugre the "lying by" ten hours for the storm, sea sickness and other casualties, we laughed and jested to our heart's content and set our faces as a flint toward Old Point Comfort. Sunday afternoon, all hands were on deck. You might as well have tried to keep cork under water, as to have prevented our catching the first glimpse of Fortress Monroe. We had rather a damp appearance, it is true, but the rain was nearly at an end, and not much of it opposed us now. There lay the Rip Raps, a huge pile of stones, spreading off into the water and in the midst

our Flag. On every side we were surrounded by Transports, laden with troops, horses and forage. Handkerchiefs waved, cheers resounded, and we put into the wharf all alive with eagerness for what was to come. *En masse*, we made our way to Gen. [John E.] Wool's head quarters. The gallant chief received us as cordially as we could wish, and with him for our guide we walked around the Ramparts, neither mud nor rain deterring us. There lay the *Monitor* in sight. Nobody said much about her; every one thought; but wisely withheld expression. It was very raw and cold, and with the exception of Gen. Wool, whose blood seemed youngest of all, we were shivering and shaking, and trying to forget discomfort. A return to the boat was inevitable, at least for the ladies, and we went aboard rather gloomily, forboding a dull morrow. Monday morning crept in, dark and chill. Breakfast over, and now what next? As if he had purposely withheld his rays until then, out burst Old Sol, and with his shine dispelled our gloom. Oh, what a glorious day! We are bound for Newport News — come aboard with us in imagination and steam up the River to the scene of glory! [The famous fight between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* had taken place on March 9, 1862.] See, in the distance, a wreck looms from the water! It is the *Cumberland*! [sunk by the *Merrimac* on March 8] Our hearts beat quickly; no word is spoken. Nearer we glide, and lo! the Stars and Stripes! Floating, panting to the breeze, our banner, our torn flag, waving, God be thanked, "o'er the home of the free!" . . .

And now for Newport News, conducted by the officers of Gen. Wool's staff, who, together with their splendid brass band, paid us the compliment of accompanying us from the Fort. We were presented to Gen. [Joseph] Mansfield, and greeted with seventeen guns in honor of Mr. Hamlin. Aha! that will warn our opposite neighbors of what a fine prize they might possibly catch, and we know that just as we are spying on them through our glasses, they were watching us. The great hole made in Gen. Mansfield's house by the enemy's cannon during the *Merrimac* fight, does not reassure the timid. We take our leave of Newport News with our hands full of relics, ropes from the *Cumberland*, the celebrated ink-bottle that had its top knocked off by the cannon shock and never surrendered (a proof that black blood will stand fire), and we are now making for Hampton Roads. The burned town gains from us pity for our enemies, and we linger only long enough to bewail the treason which is bringing down on every rebel head a full destruction. And now for the *Monitor*.

We draw up alongside the little black defender, and board her, laughing at the comical appearance she presents. One look into her turret, and we are silent. Awe takes the place of our dubiety and we proceed to examine this masterpiece of science, learning at every step the mighty wonder of her power. Who can describe this magic vessel, which, cold and repellent in exterior, cannot be rivalled for comfort and elegance within? We enter the turret, stand by the big guns, and we kiss them, Mr. Editor, for their hard, big iron mouths are wonderously handsome in our eyes! Women love strength and defense, and many a fresh lip pressed the good guns of the *Monitor*. The Captain took a hammer and cracked away a piece of iron from the vessel, and I guard it as a precious gem, within my jewel box. And now, while we are again gathered upon the iron deck, we call the band aboard, and send a boat for Gen. Wool. We wish to receive him on the *Monitor*, and as he approaches "Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances," bursts from the band. The General is now received by Mr. Hamlin, and we gather about him, while the Vice President makes a most eloquent and touching address to the Old Chief. Then follow cheers for the General, cheers for his Staff, for Ericsson, for the *Monitor*, and every thing and every body, and what with the music, the crowd of glittering officers, I assure you we had a fine time! Having taken a kindly parting from General Wool, we set out for the *Minnesota*. [Flagship of the Union fleet.] When quite near her, several fine boats were sent to convey us to her. We found the officers prepared for our reception, the vessel in splendid trim, and all on board ready to welcome us. Conducted by Commodore Goldsboro [sic. Louis M. Goldsborough] and Captain Van Brunt, we examined every part of the huge ship. We talked with the wounded sailors who had been taken from the *Congress* and *Cumberland*, and when we left the *Minnesota* we felt fully repaid for our fatigue. "When you reach your own boat keep your eyes on the ship," said Capt. Van Brunt, and when safely aboard the *King Philip*, we looked diligently at the *Minnesota*. Suddenly from the great ship's sides poured the salute to the Vice President — seventeen guns booming on the air. The order to "man the yards" was given, and like a troop of squirrels the sailors ran up the ropes, filling every part of the rigging! As we stood there, the gallant tars lifted their caps and gave three hearty cheers for "King Philip's party," and so we bade farewell to the *Minnesota*. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, Apr. 23, 1862]



[July 10, 1862]

. . . The young girls of Washington have been getting up private Fairs for the benefit of the Hospitals. The invited guests who "accept" are expected to buy from the fancy table spread in the parlor, or from the flower table or the refreshment room. At Secretary Smith's house one of these Fairs was held last evening. The flower table was perfect. Some of the baskets sold for \$25. One large basket was filled with dark moss in the center, and the word "Union" imbedded therein, while around the edge was a broad, full wreath of exotics. The *Magnolia Grandiflora* was displayed in great perfection. This white flower, as large as a lady's two hands held together, has a thick white leaf, upon which may be written sentences with a pen or pencil. The Southern youth, when avoiding anxious mama's observation, sometimes write very tender love letters to their sweethearts upon the magnolia leaf, and thereby elude the vigilance of the uninitiated observer. Among other pretty objects at the Fair, was a nice stand, with a basket of moss and flowers for the base, a globe of gold and silver fish for the center, and a basket of ferns above the globe of fishes. From three to four hundred dollars are sometimes made at these exclusive little fairs, for gentlemen go expecting to give not less than five dollars and some have given ten times that sum. There are no parties now — a few pic-nics, but the principal interest among the ladies is preparation for sea-side visits. . . .

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, July 18, 1862]

[December 13, 1862]

. . . The wife of Secretary Smith has put in train a pleasant plan for Christmas. All the soldiers, in all the hospitals in Washington, are to have a Christmas dinner, a banquet. — Twenty thousand homesick soldiers, all to have Christmas cheer. Mrs. Lincoln will provide for one hospital, different ladies for others, and in this way all will be cared for. Mrs. Lincoln does not receive calls, excepting in the evening. The Cabinet Ladies, I hear, do not intend having receptions. . . .

To-day, Mrs. Harlan [Senator James Harlan of Iowa] and others start for the scene of conflict, with large amounts of hospital stores. [The battle of Fredericksburg was taking place at the time this letter was written.] Great preparations are made for the wounded. I cannot tell you what a nervous state of anxiety there is here — the sun shines, the air is full of happy sounds, the hand organs play "Old John Brown," and the children

sing with them; yet no one forgets for an instant that terror and death are at hand. Secessionists look very gloomy. That is a good sign for us. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Dec. 23, 1862]

[December 23, 1862]

. . . Every one is cast down about the Fredericksburg repulse. The streets are full of poor, jaded, unpaid soldiers, and often they are so weary they sit on the pavements to rest before they can walk another step. It is a sight to make any eyes weep, those tired heroes, lonely and homesick, wounded or exhausted.

Preparations for the Christmas dinner for the Soldiers go on extensively. Mrs. Harlan, Mrs. Melville Hoxie, and other Iowa ladies do what is in their power to help the suffering at the Hospitals.

Mrs. Lincoln is laying aside her mourning. She will receive calls on New Year's in black velvet, trimmed with thread lace. . . . The fashions this winter are very comical, the height of ladies' bonnets being absolutely ridiculous. Large white muslin bows with lace-trimmed ends, are worn instead of breast-pins on cloaks and walking-dresses. This has the effect of making ladies look quite ministerial. Cloaks are pretty much all long sacks, and braided trimmings are most in favor. Frizzled hair is all the rage. Ladies cut their lovely locks about four inches long, and curl them at night over the forehead and close to the head. These curls are all combed through in a mass next morning, and stand out like darkey's hair, precisely. I have seen many a dark-skinned woman try as hard to get the kink out of her hair, as our ladies try now to get it in. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Dec. 28, 1862]

[December 28, 1862]

Washington has seen a Happy Christmas this year. Kris Kringle has been more than ordinarily liberal in his gifts, and our beautifully adorned churches, the Christmas trees seen in private dwellings, the grand feasts given to the soldiers in the Hospitals, all argue an abundance unlooked for at this time of Civil War. . . .

Our Hospital soldiers had a glorious day. It was a nervous time, though, for just the day before Christmas it was pretty justly feared that there would not be nearly enough provisions for the men. Mrs. Secretary Smith had worked very hard to obtain money and supplies, but a check that was supposed by her to be \$1,000 turned out to be only \$100, and so in differ-

ent ways she found herself disappointed and perplexed. Then began the sure signs of human nature and old Adam among some of the discontented fair sex: "I always said it was too much to undertake. Poor soldiers, to give them hope of a dinner, and then not feed them," &c., &c., words calculated to wound and dishearten the ladies upon whom the responsibility of success or failure must rest. But fortunately other ladies stepped forward heartily, with purses ready, and cheering words, and a great lot of Turkeys and Chickens arriving from Pittsburg[h] in the nick of time, made all hearts happy, and took all fear of scanty fare away. Very soon such a smell of Christmas arose from the Hospital kitchens and dining rooms, that the poor boys, homesick and wounded, could see home in the roast goose smoke, and better fancy the home hearth-stone, and the "house-mother" and the little happy children than they could have done without the aid of Mrs. Smith and her kind assistants. And the dinners were handsome, too! No cold-bit look about them. Candied pyramids, fruits, jellies, and other good things were quite as profuse as the more solid edibles. Then while the men were charging knives at double quick, in came Old Abe, first to one Hospital then the other, with Mrs. Lincoln smiling and friendly, and many a word of cheer was spoken by our noble President, and many a coat-sleeve wiped many a homesick fellow's eyes, as they listened to honest Abraham's unvarnished words of kindness. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 4, 1863]

[January 12, 1863]

The interest and entertainments of the past week have been almost entirely devoted to the good of our soldiers. I cannot refrain from telling you of the successful exertions of a young Northern lady, who has accomplished one of the best works yet attempted for the pleasure and entertainment of the Hospital invalid. The young girl to whom I allude possesses a very fine voice, and sings patriotic songs with a fervor that delights every listener. She has been in the habit of visiting the Hospitals accompanied by her sister and other friends, and she will sing by the hour to the poor homesick fellows, ballads, battlesongs, &c., until she leaves them cheered and comforted by her sweet singing. After a time it occurred to her that a library for the sick men and convalescents would be acceptable to them, since she had noticed some difficulty in supplying them with papers and books. — So with characteristic energy she went to work to collect volumes, first by herself,

and then with the aid of friends, until now she has over 2,000 interesting books at their disposal. She has acted as Librarian, and her kindly manners have endeared her to all who have met her. Within a few days she has succeeded in getting a Bill through Congress granting a lot on Judiciary Square upon which should be erected a large wooden building for a Soldier's Library. A few days after, this noble young lady gave a public Concert at Willard's Hall, assisted by other amateurs, and was rewarded by obtaining half the sum needed for her new building. The Concert will be repeated next week. I do not know when I have been more gratified at such an instance of philanthropy in so young a person. . . .

Speaker Grow's evening receptions began last Friday. These are without question the most pleasant entertainments in the gay or fashionable world during this season. There is no dancing, but always animated conversation and delightful refreshments. Mrs. Grow has rendered herself wholly popular, and society regrets sincerely that Speaker Grow was not re-elected this year past. Owing to the number he had influenced to enlist, and also to the fact that he was very ill during the campaign, he lost his election, and his numerous friends seem to regret the fact far more than he does himself.

Mrs. Lincoln received morning calls on Saturday, and will continue to do so throughout the season, that is to say until Congress rises. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 21, 1863]

[February 16, 1863]

The Capital, for want of a greater cause of interest, has been fain to be pleased and diverted with the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Stratton, alias Tom Thumb, and his little wife. — They remained here three days, and were much noticed and feasted. I had the honor of two invitations to meet their "lownessess" for "highnessess" would be an inexpressive term. One party was at the President's House, the other at Willard's. As illness prevented my meeting the distinguished Lilliputians, I must quote the description of their attractiveness, given by my friends. A distinguished Brigadier General, whose room at Willard's adjoined that of the little couple, being only separated from them by a thin door, was warned of their arrival by hearing a piping, mouse-like little voice exclaim, "My Dear, it is impossible for me to find my brush and comb," and a small voice replied emphatically, "*Women* never do know where to find anything, my dear!" During the party at Willard's, the small pair entered the Hall and delighted the as-



sembly with their handsome dress and pleasing manner. Mrs. Stratton is truly pretty, *embonpoint*, and merry. For my own part, I do not much enjoy the notoriety made by any unnatural physical cause, so I cannot write with much enthusiasm of the Bride and Groom. Some one addressing Madam as "Mrs. Thumb," her spouse straightened himself and indignantly said, "Mrs. Stratton, if you please!" At the President's, Mr. Lincoln and Tom Thumb were indeed the "long and the short of the matter," and Brobdingnag and Lilliput seemed realized. — Mrs. Stratton, I am told, remarked to a lady at the Hotel, that "until she met Mr. Stratton, she had never seen her ideal of a man." The Bridal party were accompanied by Mr. Wells, their agent, and the Bride's *petite* sister, her maid, and her brother who is a soldier in our army. They have all left Washington now, and the citizens and strangers remember them kindly.

The city is very gay now, but as Lent is so close at hand, it is to be hoped that useless expenditure of time and money, during this War season, will cease. Illness has prevented me from taking part in the gaities of the Capital, and therefore it is principally from hearsay that I know of the extravagant dressing and lavish expenditure of our Ladies. — But I have seen enough to realize that War does not lessen love of show, or richness of apparel. Having to *chaperone* a very lovely Belle lately, I took special notice of her dress that I might describe it to my lady friends. — It was white silk, long train, with the first over dress of puffed tulle, and above that a tunic of gold-sprigged lace, decorated with wheat sheaves and field flowers (artificial and French, of course) with wheat and poppies, and lace ornamenting the long pointed corsage. The hair was dressed very high on the head, and rolled over cushions, roll above roll, as is the fashion now, with scarlet poppies just above the forehead. This was the prettiest dress I have seen this winter.

The "Hotel Circle" is the gayest of all, and I have seen so many persons come to Washington with virtuous horror of its follies, and strong resolves to withstand them, and set a shining example of resistance to worldly wiles, and I have so invariably found these daughters of Eve borne by the tide of Washington bewilderment, that I listen quite composedly as I hear of Theatre-going, dancing, &c., on the part of these same "example-setters." . . .

The season is nearly over, and Congress hurries its work rapidly. The galleries are crowded with ladies, and the House of Representatives becomes more and more a scene of absorbing interest. By the way, there are a

number of Members of Congress who seem never to forget the galleries. It is really laughable to learn in a short time who are the gallery members. I always expect to see certain faces, passing in the galleries, laughing and jesting and conversing with their lady friends. I find myself not looking in such and such a seat on the floor for the Hon. Gentleman from such and such a State, but my eyes turn at once around the galleries, if I happen to think of their names, and there you may be sure to find them. As Statesmen, the gentlemen must be of light weight. Whatever their attractions are as beaux, others must judge; but I confess to honoring those gentlemen the most, who attend to their desks and "Mr. Speaker," and forget the Mrs. and Miss Speakers, up stairs.

[Des Moines Iowa State Register, Feb. 25, 1863]

[March 9, 1863]

No one can imagine, who has not witnessed it, the confusion at Washington consequent upon the rise of Congress. Everything is hurried into the last week of the Session, and the performance of each day's duties is a task equal to a month's work at another part of the season. The Bills crowded through Congress must be accepted *per force*, as a compensation for all the squandered time of the winter. In social matters, the same rule holds good. Every one who has not given a party, gives one now. Each evening has its three and four entertainments. Carriages are flying through the mud or dust, and ladies' cards are left in all directions, "*pour prendre conge*." . . . The other evening I attended a very brilliant party at the house of an aristocratic Boston Member, where were gathered distinguished Generals, Lord Lyons, and other Diplomats, Members of the Cabinet, &c. &c. And who else do you suppose? Guess, and guess again! Not right yet? Well! who indeed but the Haytien Embassy!! It is so, I tell you; there they were, guests and honored guests, and unmistakably *colored* at that! — It was a new sensation. There is no mistake about it! I felt queerly, as though I were having a very funny dream. Two elegant colored gentlemen, white kid gloves, Parisian toilet, conversing in Spanish, French and English, yet most unmistakably darkey! Col. Romaine, the Haytien Charge d'Affairs, is tall, very fine looking and bright copper colored. His hair is like that of an Indian, his features Spanish, and his manner very French. His Secretary is a regular colored representative and no mistake. The hair of this gentleman *kinks*! How else can I describe it! Well, it was droll to see

them in society, but they were modest and reserved, acting with perfect dignity, and evidently *gentlemen*. I confess I stared more at them than was quite polite, and found it a little hard to keep my face straight, for any one who has been raised in a slave State finds it a little ludicrous to be entertaining people from Hayti. With the exception of myself I believe the guests were Northern born, and as I am such a good Abolitionist, I soon found that it was not at all difficult to pay proper attention and respect to these Haytien dignitaries. Very soon after supper, they took their departure, and although the guests smiled a little at the strange companionship, they did not evince repugnance to the men whose manners were so gentlemanly. The European diplomatic gentlemen present entered into cordial conversation with them. I saw the stylish waiters roll their eyes solemnly, as the master of the House himself waited upon his dark guests at supper, but they did not even smile, or indicate otherwise their surprise. . . .

I wish my Lady friends could see the tremendous change in the fashion of hair dressing just copied at New York and Washington from Paris styles. A lady wishing to dress her hair fully *a la mode*, goes to the hair dressers and purchases a cataract, a cat, two rats and two mice! These are names of the cushions upon which the hair is rolled. I remember hearing that my great grandmother used to have the cushion upon which her hair was rolled, secured to the head by a long pin thrust through the skin of the scalp, which became quite callous after long usage! My scalp begins to ache in anticipation, as I see the hair towering more and more above the ladies' heads. Woe to those who must depend on a hair dresser, and cannot imitate fashion! At the Hotels this winter the "*Coifuriere*" was obliged to begin at three in the afternoon, in order to accommodate all the ladies who had engaged their services, before ten o'clock. The first time I adopted moderately this style I was quite startled at the tower on my head, but the more of a Babel I get there now, the better contented am I. So despotic is custom, and such simpletons are we! Such looking heads as are carried in Washington would scare any respectable team on the streets of Des Moines! Shades of our grandmothers! Powder is coming also! Powdered hair, long pointed bodices, and next will come, Oh, gentlemen, *short clothes*, for you! Fashion will not spare you, Sirs! Prepare your minds at once. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, March 18, 1863]

[December 9, 1863]

. . . Washington looks strangely to me. It seems to have lost its former



distinctive features, with the exception of dust and boarding houses. I have asked many persons, especially among the old residents and decayed gentility, what is the cause of the change, and the answer is, invariably, "shoddy!" Now, this term is so comprehensive that it utters a great deal, and certainly there is a newness, a sort of awkwardly-displayed wealth on the streets that bespeaks a grand convulsion in society — a turning up of the social soil, a burial of the "upper crust," and a revelation of the hitherto hidden strata. Now I, for one, am not disposed to quarrel altogether with "shoddy." It has worked well for its money, and on the loyal side of turn-penny. I laugh a little to see "Shoddy's" wife with four or five India shawls, and diamonds by the quart, but confess to coveting a small portion nevertheless. There is a wonderful "turning-up" of noses amongs F. F. V.'s, who have nothing left but the "good old blood" to boast of, at the new people made by the war speculation, but this grand revolution was needed for a healthy, vigorous social growth, and though in new soil many weeds must flourish, by and bye a hearty, active race will fill the places of lazy Secesh gentility. So, good luck to Mr. and Mrs. Shoddy, and all the little Shoddies. The world is wide enough for everybody!

The strong-minded element is also now a feature of Washington. We have Fred Douglas [*sic.* Frederick Douglass, famous Negro orator] lecturing, and women lecturing, and you may see any day on the Avenue, "Dr. Smith," a handsome young lady dressed in black cloth pantaloons and with a tunic or Bloomer dress, and a black Spanish cloth cape, with also a high crowned hat. Dr. Smith practices medicine, *she* does, and carries a satchel containing her pills and powders. I saw her and the picture of the five-legged calf on the Avenue at the same moment, and was so confused with two such uncouth phenomena that I really could not do justice to either.

. . .

The White House is to be very gay this winter. That the President, having safely recovered from varioloid, the word has gone around that strangers are to be well entertained at the Presidential mansion this year. Our new and genial Speaker, Mr. [Schuyler] Colfax, has taken a large house, and his mother and sister will do the honors thereof. Mrs. Gov. Sprague [Kate Chase, daughter of Salmon P. Chase, had married William Sprague, former governor of Rhode Island, now a Senator], more queenly than ever, will be the leading star in social circles. And as for fashions — how can I describe them? Never were they so capricious! Dresses and



cloaks are trimmed with epaulette trimmings. Everything is *a-la-militaire*. Bonnets are small and very becoming in style, and felt and beaver hats are now worn everywhere, even in New York. The Glengarry hat is the prettiest, quite eclipsing the Spanish high crown, and *wings* are worn on the Glengarry instead of feathers. So that a sick soldier remarked the other day that he knew angels had been near him, for they had *wings*. Curls are all the rage, and hoops are beautifully less. Fashion is just upon the turn, and we shall now have the powdered hair and gored two-breadth dresses. Oh, ye horrors! Russian leather muffs and belts are much worn, and little outside pockets of leather hanging from the belt. Gold and silver butterflies are worn in the hair. In truth, so many novelties have appeared that I stare along at the shop windows like a Chinese, for I am puzzled to know what these traps for green-backs are meant for, so utterly new are they to my eyes. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Dec. 23, 1863]

[December 19, 1863]

. . . Well, let me see what there is to tell of interest! Oh, the Russian fleet of course. — What a glorious visit we made to the Admiral, and how heartily he welcomed us to his ship. It would puzzle any one to tell of the dishes that were served at the collation, for never were such oddities seen by your correspondent, and never such marvels tasted. — Everything was Russian, and everything was good; but the combinations of form and flavor were magic to me, at any rate. Each guest was presented with a bouquet of exotics, and after the collation, a wonderful brass band discoursed intoxicating, bewildering music, moving the grave Senator or Statesman to the light fantastic, and driving the belles of Washington to desperate rivalry in obtaining the strong arm of support from some fair moustached Russian officer in dance and Schottische. As the Russians speak no English, their invitation to waltz was simply a seizure of their partner, and no objections were offered by any of the lassies, so far as I could judge. The bride of the Admiral, Mme. Lisovski, was on board; she has a very kindly countenance, but is fifteen years older than the Admiral, who is about fifty years of age. . . .

And now I must tell of quite a new fashion, but may good angels forbid our Iowa ladies from adopting it! There has arisen a wonderful mania among the fair sex to lead about the streets little dogs, little wretched curly poodles, or long land-spaniels, or Italian grey-hounds blanketed! and those

poor *doglets* are collared and led by a ribbon, and the owner thereof walks by its side, and one seems to me to have about as much sense as the other! Now there is some comfort and real companionship in a large, noble dog that looks into your eyes with an honest expression of friendliness, as though it longed to utter its hearty good will in words instead of barks! But what possesses ladies to make pets of miserable little poodles is past my comprehension. Now the fashionable lady would shudder at the thought of carrying her own pretty baby down Broadway or Pennsylvania, and I confess it would be rather inconvenient; but why a snappy, snarly, red-eyed little dog is an improvement on this I can't see! A lady went up town the other day with no less than four ribbon-led puppies, and they danced about to the infinite risk of tripping up every wayfarer who came within any respectable distance of the happy owner. . . .

Washington society is much changed this winter. Many wealthy residents have removed for the winter to Northern cities. — "Decayed gentility" remaining here by force of circumstances has retired within its own circles as much as possible. The wives of several Diplomats have gone to their foreign homes, and they will indeed be missed in society. Very, very many families who had made preparations for entertaining on a large scale, have been stricken by the hand of death, and the mourning garb has taken the place of gay attire, and tears sadden the cheek so recently dimpled with smiles. . . . The most stylish equipages in Washington this winter belong to Copperheads. Having given nothing to the war, they have feathered their nests very comfortably. One of my neighbors, who is the head and front of Copperheadism, drives a splendid pair of horses, and rests on his cushioned seats, in the most lordly and supercilious style. But my memory carries me back to the days when he knew not of a carriage, but "walked in his integrity," which cannot be said of him now, actually or figuratively. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Dec. 30, 1863]

[December 29, 1863]

. . . Christmas has been very joyous in Washington. Santa Claus was unusually generous, and the Churches are marvels of beautiful decoration. The Christmas Eve, of this year, at "the Epiphany" I can never forget. At half past five, about 300 children of the Sabbath School of that Church assembled and were delighted to behold a Christmas Tree which was indeed a wonder to old and young. The great Cedar reached nearly to the ceiling,

from its high platform, and just over it hung the Christ-child, or Christmas angel, a beautiful figure, dressed as an angel in fleecy, cloud-like gauze, and with hands outspread over the loaded branches. Innumerable wax candles glimmered amidst the tree, and also bright lanterns of colored isinglass. Every child of the Sunday School received a present from the tree, so its size can be imagined. . . .

After New Years the gay season begins. Mrs. Lincoln has held one very brilliant reception, cards having been issued to the desired guests. I have never seen so distinguished an assemblage as met on this occasion. The officers of the Russian fleet, the Diplomatic Corps, the members of the Cabinet and their families, Senators, Judges, Congressmen, and superior Army and Navy officers, all met with cordial greetings and hearty good will. The marine band played finely, and the ladies were resplendent in their new winter "Cabinet" costumes. The loveliest looking lady there was Mrs. Hamlin. "Lovely" is the descriptive word because she seemed so true and cordial, so gentle and winning. Mrs. Fernando Wood [Fernando Wood, Congressman from New York and a leader of the "Peace Democrats"] was attired as might be a Princess. I saw one lady with a velvet mantle reaching to the feet, heavily embroidered with gold. There were more court dresses at this first matinee at the White House than generally appear upon a similar occasion. Etiquette required that all those invited should attend, and therefore the number of guests was very great . . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 13, 1864]

[January 19, 1864]

. . . Every day and hour is full of event, and it is a hard fight to bring into the twelve hours social, intellectual and domestic duties. Invitations abound for every kind of entertainment — lectures without end, concerts, sculptures, callings and drives. — Nothing but a determined will, and a strong preference for home can secure to the Martyr of Life at the Capital any hours for privacy and domestic enjoyment. Yet Washington is a pleasant place, and nowhere in society do we find more good-will and genial kindness. Do you know we have had skating here this winter, fine skating for several days? I went down to the Long Bridge with a party of young people, and amused myself watching their performance until it thoroughly aggravated me to think that skating had not been a ladies' fashion in my own day. . . . The skating dress is very pretty for ladies — crimson, gray



or blue cloth trousers [sic], balmoral skirt reaching to the top of the boot, a full dress skirt over, worn with fur trimmings around the hem, a bright fur trimmed basque with pockets trimmed with fur, fur gloves, Glengarry caps, and boots trimmed with fur around the ankles. Beautiful steel skates are strapped quickly upon the feet, and off go the skaters as free and happy as birds at sea.

Professor Agassiz has been giving a course of lectures upon Glaciers. They were very fascinating, the first two thrillingly interesting. The last one was so speculative that it required more faith than I possess to swallow it! It may be that our continent was once the abode of Glaciers. It may be that these were produced by a terrible snow-storm lasting for years, perhaps. It may be that this storm was the result of the dense quantities of vapor accumulating in the atmosphere, from volcanic masses of heated rock cast into the ocean and causing wondrous clouds to arise, but nobody knows whether this be so or not, and for my part, not being scientific, I had to have a hearty laugh over the Professor's unprecedented snow storm, falling as he so devoutly believed, before man was created! He maintains that all the hills and valleys of Iowa and the West were formed by Glaciers extending from the Northern regions, gradually moving Southward into the Southern States. These carried the fragments of rock and other solid materials within and upon them, which they deposited as the glacier melted under the influence of the heat which gradually increased from the tropics Northward. He would account in this way for the boulders which are found and known as "lost rocks" in Iowa.

But the most interesting and exciting lecture of the season was given by Miss Annie Dickinson last week, in the Hall of the House of Representatives. The galleries and floor were crowded to their utmost capacity. Every one was there, expectant, smiling, ready to mock or sneer, or eager to applaud. I have never marked so many varied expressions of countenance as I saw amongst that immense throng. The President and Mrs. Lincoln sat in front of the platform, and around them the most distinguished persons present. Old Abe had a half solemn, half grinning expression now and then, as though the scene "reminded him of a story." But he held his honest old head down, and it was hard guessing what he did think. At eight o'clock Vice President Hamlin conducted Miss Dickinson to her seat on the platform, and in a neat little speech introduced her to her audience. I saw the color entirely fade from the young lady's face as she confronted



the sea of faces before, around and above her, but she betrayed no other signs of emotion. In a pure, full voice, she entered gradually upon her subject, becoming at last so wholly absorbed in her great thoughts of patriotism and progress, that one might well forget the youthful girl in admiration of her eloquence, and recognize only the orator, the voice of all true loyal heartedness expressed through those brave tones.

Miss Dickinson is, to my eyes, very handsome — about twenty years of age, with a steel gray eye, full red lips and fine teeth. — Her hair is dark and cut tolerably short, just below the ears. She dresses with simple elegance, and is very ladylike in manner, although somewhat angular in her movements. Raised a Quaker, she will never dispense with a certain reserve or frigidity of manner which carries with it a conviction of sincerity and single-mindedness. Being entirely radical, Miss Dickinson did not mince matters, but gave her opinion of the President unsparingly, ending however with the hope that all would be made right in his next term of office. She very handsomely complimented Mr. Lincoln after having relieved her mind, and the balm offered more than compensated for the wound. The lecture was long, but interest never flagged. Her descriptions of battles and hospitals were awfully harrowing. She can never have suffered personal losses in this war or she could not have portrayed, so vividly, scenes that were almost too terrible to describe. I am glad to have heard her, but after the glamour of the hour had passed I thought of her with mingled pride and pain. I do not care to hear a young girl speak before the public again. It may be womanly, but it is not maidenly. Far be it from me to criticise real merit, but I am old-fashioned in my notions, so far as woman-life is concerned. No woman can live for crowds of beaux and admirers and preserve that peculiar charm of her sex — home charm! But all honor to Miss Dickinson! She is good and true, young and beautiful, and may Heaven guard her! . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Feb. 3, 1864]

[January 10, 1865]

. . . The city has been honored by a visit from Vice Admiral Farragut, and eager eyes have crowded to behold the grand old hero. I was invited to a dinner party given to him at Willard's and as he honored me with a seat at his right hand, I made the most of my opportunity and asked all the questions I chose concerning matters great and small, relating to the Ad-

miral's experience. — With regard to dress; the rank of Vice Admiral is designated by three very broad gold bands around the coat sleeve near the hand, and three stars on the shoulder. We have now in our navy, Rear Admirals, and one Vice Admiral. Should Vice Admiral Farragut win another great victory he will be Admiral in full, which is the highest rank. He is a genial, social man, full of anecdote and rallying good nature. His wife is youthful in appearance but very simple in dress. Her toilette was in marked contrast with that of a New York lady who graced the occasion, and whose diamond necklace, cross, ear-rings, rings, buttons, bracelets and breastpin dazzled our eyes with an excess of brilliancy rarely to be seen upon one unfortunate individual. I say unfortunate, for diamonds, like perfumes, have need to be used in limited quantities, for the effect is too strong to be agreeable.

I have been amazed to find how deserted the stores in Washington appear. A few days since I went into three of the principal dry goods stores and literally found myself the only purchaser each time. This state of things is owing to the fact that strangers here have done the most of their shopping at home, and the salaried people of Washington are so cramped in meeting their expenses that unnecessary purchases are not even thought of. Butter is 75 cents per pound, milk 20 cents per quart, and as for table luxuries their price is fabulous. Very few persons hire carriages now. Last year's cloaks and dresses are worn without hesitation by stylish ladies. . . . [Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 18, 1865]

[January 16, 1865]

Last Wednesday I made the Cabinet calls, and as this sort of pastime is becoming an unmitigated bore to your correspondent, probably I shall not make the same round of formal etiquette visits this session, and will therefore head my chapter on fashions with a chat about our agreeable ladies of the Cabinet. Mrs. Seward, always first, always loveliest and most gracious, hospitable and courteous in manners, she is never familiar, never forgetful of her dignity. Her parlors are always crowded, and that too by the most refined and elegant ladies and gentlemen. Her dress on reception day was a heavy wine colored silk, trimmed with black ribbon, a very rich point lace, coiffure simply arranged, and jewelry elegant and appropriate. At Mrs. S's an usher announces the names of ladies as they enter the drawing room, and therefore Mrs. Seward is never betrayed into the awkwardness

of forgetting an old acquaintance even amongst her host of callers. She always rises and advances with extended hand and pleased expression, but never devotes more than a minute or two to each caller. Mrs. Stanton is the most stately lady in the Cabinet. She is very handsome but much complaint is made of her freezing manner and repellant address. Her reception toilette was asurline blue and velvet. The family of [the] new Postmaster General [William Dennison] is very charming. Mrs. Dennison is handsome and gracious, her young daughter the picture of health and freshness, and in manner very winning. Miss Neal and Miss Swayne, of Columbus, are with Mrs. Dennison this winter, and aid in making her house an unusually attractive one.

Mr. Fessenden's [Secretary of the Treasury W. P. Fessenden] young daughter-in-law does the honors of his house this winter. She is pretty and affable. Mrs. Welles did not receive on account of illness, and the family of Mr. Speed [Attorney General James Speed] have not yet arrived. Mrs. Usher [Secretary of the Interior John P. Usher] is always cordial and chatty, and seems to be very popular. Mrs. Matthews, the mother of Speaker Colfax, receives also on Wednesdays. She and her young daughter signed the Loyal Woman's Pledge and buy no imported articles. Their toilette is consequently conscientiously simple, but they are much beloved for their hearty and friendly hospitality.

The style of dress this season is very dashing. The bonnets are mere head dresses of lace and flowers, without caps, often without crowns. Black velvet with pink roses for street bonnets are most in fashion, and calling bonnets are of every imaginable style. I can only say for my own head gear, that I feel as though I were wearing one of my grandmother's funny dress caps. The hair is worn very much *creped* (without rats!) in front of these bonnets, and in a low waterfall at the back of the head. A cushion technically or rather *barbarously* termed a "cucumber," is worn at parties over the forehead, the hair frizzled (to speak English) and turned back over it. Gold nets are much worn, and immense ball hair pins, white or red ivory. Deep fluted muslin ruffles are worn as collars, and with small linen collars little white muslin cravats. The ends worn at the back of a dress waist are often a yard and a quarter long, and a quarter of a yard wide. Coats are almost wholly in *basque*, long or short, trimmed coat fashion or *en militaire*. Curls are going out, and loose large waterfalls worn instead. Bonnets are often sold now with the waterfall pinned on all ready.



. . . On short basquines for young girls, a knot of black ribbon is worn on the left shoulder, with ends a yard long. Hats are of every shape. Dresses are always looped for the street over fancy balmoral skirts — high balmoral boots worn also. The most fashionable gloves are laced on the back of the hand about an inch deep with elastic cord. Mrs. Lincoln held her first matinee day before yesterday. She desires all ladies to appear in full dress, and her wishes having become known on this point, a stranger may behold on these occasions the most perfect taste and considerable rivalry in fashionable toilettes.

Of course, my Iowa friends know that Washington has the reputation of being a remarkably wicked city. I have been loth to become a convert to this opinion, but the experience of the last four years has rather forced such a conviction upon me. I have queried and studied a good deal as to the whys and wherefores of this wickedness, and certainly it is difficult to determine why Washington should be a more dangerous city, morally speaking, than almost any other. Yet I have seen good men and good women come to this city, and under the spell, subtle and undefined, of the Capital, lose at first their intuition to detect wrong, and next their power to resist it. Extravagance in dress, in living in pursuit of pleasure, seem to steal unaware upon the unwary victim. Those once temperate, alas, betray by bloated cheek and restless eye, the sad truth of too freely taken stimulants. Some, especially among women, are tempted by ambition for social position to sacrifice home, family, a necessary economy, everything in fact, that they may be seen at every ball and party a prominent and favored guest. And, Oh! I have seen such pass from the flush and glory of their bloom to the sick room or the grave, victims of their follies and unworthy emulation. Only yesterday I paused in the street, shocked to behold a lady friend, once the center of an admiring circle, now trembling with premature palsy and the departed roses of her youth supplied by glaring rouge. I hear of opium eating, of arsenic eating, or whisky drinking (the latter under the polite name of Bourbon) until my heart sickens and grows faint with the moral atmosphere about this terrible Washington. Hotel reading rooms and bar rooms, toadyism, vanity, an ever pervading carnival of strange and exciting scenes and diversions — these break up habits of regular living, and dissipate the hours in idleness and gaiety. Every one is in good humor here, few stop to moralize, there is so much to enjoy, "what is the use of prosing?" . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 25, 1865]



[March 6, 1865]

It has been a question with me the last half hour how I am to collect my scattered wits sufficiently to write my last letter to the *Register*. Fatigue does not begin to express the deplorable weariness of body and brain, yet the Inauguration must be described, and I will proceed to tell all I know of it without further preface or apology. On Friday, the 3rd of March, Washington was thronged in every nook and cranny with strangers, distinguished and otherwise. The by-streets and cars were crowded as well as the avenues and public buildings. — The Capitol seemed to be the principal attraction and place of rendezvous, and it became rather a difficult matter to walk through the building or find a place in the galleries. Visitors at the hotels complained of semi-starvation and entire neglect, and private families stood but a poor chance of procuring food from market or stores. The last evening of Congress was an awful jam. The members were obliged to admit ladies to the floor of the House, for the galleries would not hold them. Many ladies remained until a late hour at the Senate and House, and returned to their homes in the midst of rain and mud — enough to daunt the most persistent. Early Saturday morning, although the rain still continued, carriages and cars full of ladies wended their way to the Capitol. I went myself at nine, found many before the East door already. There we were coolly informed by a horrible door-keeper that we were not to be admitted before eleven! The crowd increased until its size became nothing less than appalling. Then began that fearful pressure for a place nearer the doors, the crowd bearing up the steps and swaying to and fro, on and on, until one could hardly breathe, and could not move another inch! And there we stood, waiting and watching. Good natured people joked and laughed; cross ones looked daggers of hatred and indignation, and used elbows and heels to assist their rights. Highly aristocratic Dowagers, gorgeous in velvet and ermine, escorted by Senators of high degree stood disgusted at the law of the Medes and Persians which reiterated “door opens at eleven.” Haughty heads were tossed, dainty noses elevated, splendid dresses spoiled, and still we waited like Peris at the gate of Paradise, no “open sesame for us!” The clouds gathered darkly, and drizzled drearily down. Alas for bonnet; alas for velvet; hard-hearted door keepers were unmoved by the scenes of direst woe! At length, at length! The doors are thrown wide open, and the crowd bursts in! How we got into the Senate galleries I cannot say. I am inclined to think we flew, for I do not remember touching ground until I

found myself in a splendid front seat, wondering at my good luck, and endeavoring to collect my distracted ideas. The galleries were filled in about fifteen minutes, not a place to be had for love or brass, or what the negroes call "elbow grease" which signifies "*strength of arms.*" The Senate was still in session, all the Senators sitting to the left of the Speaker. The commotion in the galleries soon drew the rebuke of Mr. Hamlin, but in vain! — Then a grave Senator got up and made a solemn appeal to the ladies to cease their noise, and threatened to have the galleries cleared, at which a jolly titter pervaded the joyous assembly! I happened to observe that the said Senator's wife was chattering most unflaggingly, but he didn't see it! For a few minutes the galleries were quiet, then the murmur and buzz rose again, and the solemn old Senators frowned heavily. Mr. Sumner gravely and rigidly shook his finger at the galleries as if ladies cared for an old Bachelor's wrath! No one said much, only a little, each leaf in a forest makes but slight rustling, but the aggregate is a volume of sound, just so the "little members" upstairs outweighed the big Senators below, and all I have to say is that if any man was insane enough to suppose that 3,000 women could be kept quiet on Inauguration day, they deserved what they got, defeat! But when Andy Johnson appeared to take the oath of office, then all was still. Mr. Hamlin's farewell was dignified and appropriate, and he administered the oath to Mr. Johnson in a solemn and impressive manner. The diplomatic corps in their gorgeous and superb court dresses were seated at the right of the Speakers. The Judges of the Supreme Bench in their black gowns were present, and the members of the Cabinet also. Mrs. Lincoln sat in the diplomatic gallery, escorted by Senator Harlan of Iowa. The President sat in front of the Speaker's desk, facing the assembly. He looked very pale and very noble, his expression was grand! Marshal [Ward Hill] Lamon, and other Marshals, and a crowd of distinguished Generals and Statesmen occupied the floor, and the scene as beheld from the galleries was brilliant beyond description. Just as the procession formed to escort Mr. Lincoln to the great East portion of the building, where in the face of the expectant crowd he was to take the oath of office, the sun burst forth from the clouds in all His splendor, and bathed the city in a clear, strong light. This glad omen thrilled all hearts. There, in the presence of a crowd of enthusiastic friends, stood again Abraham Lincoln! — Who shall dare to say that this man was not specially raised of Providence to bless and save our Nation? Pale, quiet, he spoke his few clear sentences, with a

modesty and self-forgetfulness unparalleled. And above his head shone the sweet light of the evening star — bringing its loveliness into the day, that all hearts might hope for love and peace, that love, not war, should herald the coming years, and heal our Nation's bleeding heart.

Again the procession formed, and moved along the Avenue, black troops and white! — Yes, Africa! Four years ago, down-trodden, now uprisen, Free.

MIRIAM

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, March 15, 1865]

## HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

### *State Historical Society of Iowa*

During the months of September through December, 1953, the Society enrolled 296 new members: 64 during September; 52 during October; 30 during November; and 150 during December. Four new life members were enrolled during this period: Albert D. Libby of Des Moines; Mrs. Kathryn C. Metz of Panora; Robert Collison of Oskaloosa; and David Goepfinger of Boone.

The Society has added to its microfilm collection a film of the Council Bluffs *Nonpareil* from 1867 to 1947. This film, together with our bound volumes, gives the library full coverage of the *Nonpareil* from 1860 through 1953. Another addition to our microfilm library is a film of the doctoral dissertation prepared at the University of Chicago in 1951 by David S. Sparks: "The Birth of the Republican Party in Iowa, 1848 to 1860."

Superintendent William J. Petersen addressed the luncheon meeting at the annual meeting of the Illinois State Historical Society on October 10 at Charleston, Illinois. His topic was "Tall Tales of the Mississippi."

Dr. Robert Rutland, research associate of the Society, is the author of *The Golden Hurricane: Fifty Years of Football at the University of Tulsa*, just published by the Tulsa Quarterback Club. The book, which has twelve pages of illustrations, is a history of the sport from Indian Territorial days down to the Tulsa-Georgia game played January 1, 1946.

Superintendent William J. Petersen and Dr. Robert Rutland, research associate, attended the meeting of the American Historical Association at Chicago, December 28-30, 1953.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S CALENDAR

October 10

Addressed meeting of Illinois State Historical Society  
at Charleston, Illinois.



- November 4      Attended meeting of Walt Whitman Club, Des Moines.
- December 28-30      Attended meeting of the American Historical Association, at Chicago.

### *Iowa Historical Activities*

A Chickasaw County Historical Society was organized at a meeting in Fredericksburg on December 8, 1953. Officers elected were: Mrs. Earl Edson of Republic, president; Tom D. Conklin of Nashua, vice-president; Rev. Glenn L. Utterbach of Nashua, secretary; and Mrs. Glen Young of Bassett, treasurer. The county will celebrate its centennial in 1955.

The Floyd County Historical Society was organized at a meeting at Charles City, October 29, 1953. John Legel of Charles City was elected president; I. W. Edie of Rudd, first vice-president; Miss Charlotte Magdsick of Charles City, second vice-president and research director; Mrs. Selby Russell of Rockford, secretary; and Mrs. Ray Sweet of Colwell, treasurer. This organization is the culmination of more than a year's work by the Floyd County Federation of Women's Clubs and eight study clubs in different towns.

The Floyd County centennial, to be observed during the week of August 15-21, 1954, will be under the direction of Robert A. Sar of Charles City. Members of the committee include: D. W. Curry, Floyd; Paul C. Stalker, Rudd; Lloyd B. Coates, Nora Springs; R. R. Tamblyn, Marble Rock; and Melvin Kollman, Rockford.

Kossuth County is planning on a centennial celebration on July 4-6, 1954. Roy McMahon is treasurer of the drive to collect funds, and Elmer Langmack is finance chairman.

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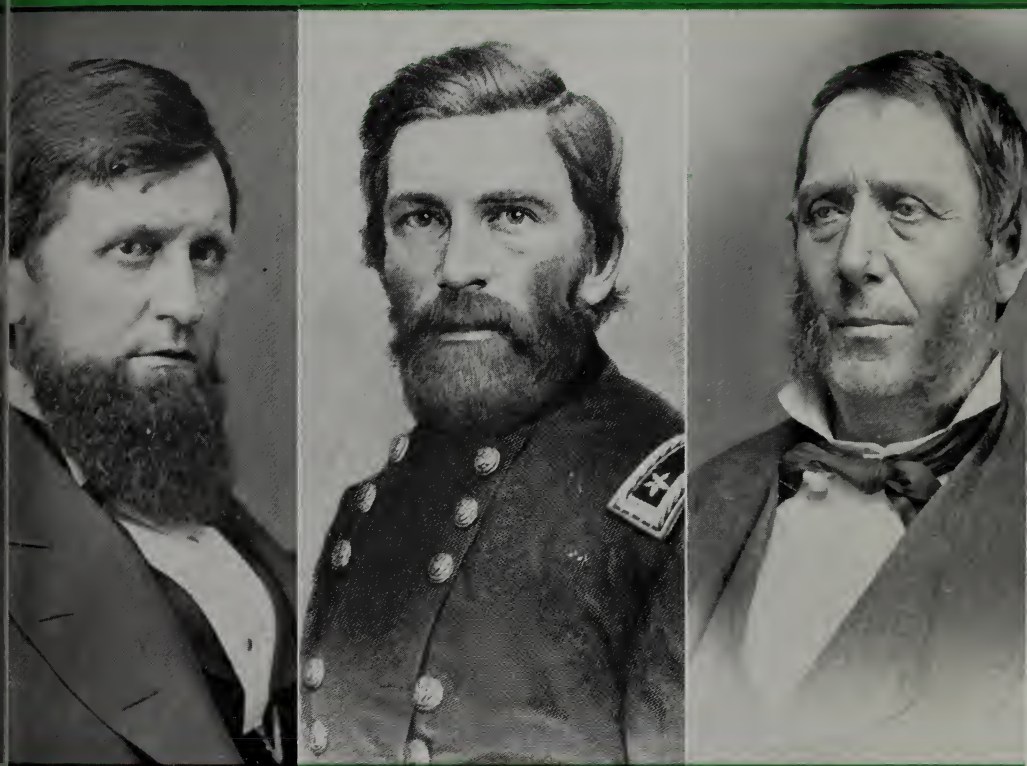
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## COVER

Leading members of "Dodge & Co." From left to right: William B. Allison, Grenville M. Dodge, Samuel J. Kirkwood. These pictures show the men as they looked at about the time of which Dr. Sage writes in his article. Allison's picture was taken about 1869; Dodge's during the Civil War; Kirkwood's in 1873.

# WILLIAM B. ALLISON AND IOWA SENATORIAL POLITICS, 1865-1870

*By Leland L. Sage\**

Just as the Civil War was ending in triumph for the Union cause, a rather inglorious but significant chapter in Iowa senatorial politics was beginning. The roll call of names involved reads like the membership list of Iowa's Hall of Fame: James W. Grimes, James Harlan, Samuel Jordan Kirkwood, George G. Wright, James F. Wilson, John A. Kasson, William Boyd Allison, and many others of secondary standing.. Senator Grimes was nearing the end of his career; of the remaining names on the list, Allison would out-strip all in the race for office and fame. And yet Allison found no easy path to victory.

In 1865 William Boyd Allison was a relatively obscure Congressman from the Third District of Iowa. Later panegyrists were to assert confidently that he had greatly helped Lincoln in winning the war and saving the nation — a remarkable claim in view of the fact that he did not begin his congressional service until December, 1863. His first-term committee assignments were unimportant, and he was not a pro-Lincoln or Conservative Republican but a staunch Radical affiliated with such other Radicals as Edwin M. Stanton, Kirkwood, Grimes, and Wilson. In 1865 his record would not reveal anything outstanding, and yet there were personal qualifications that brought his name prominently into the list of those considered for senatorial honors in that year.

A good word picture of him at this time is the following description, written by "Linkensale," an Iowa correspondent in Washington, whose articles were widely published in Iowa newspapers:

Mr. Allison of the Third District is the youngest man of the Delegation. He looks like a man of brain, energy and backbone. If he

\*Leland L. Sage is professor of history at Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Dr. Sage is writing a full-length biography of William B. Allison. See Sage, "The Early Life of William Boyd Allison" and "William B. Allison's First Term in Congress, 1863-1865," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 48:299-334 (October 1950), and 50:315-44 (October, 1952); Sage, "Weaver in Allison's Way . . .," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 31:485-507 (January, 1953).

be not a clever fellow, in the best and highest sense of that phrase, there is no sense in looks. He has so much of the milk of human kindness in his nature that if one had lost his reckoning in a great city and should see Allison in a crowd of a dozen men, he would walk straight up to him and tell him of his perplexity — so good natured is the very phiz of the member from the Dubuque District. He is almost always smoking, and evidently enjoys his Havana hugely. The only unmarried man of the delegation, he is, of course, the best dressed man. He is a good speaker, a fine lawyer, an entertaining conversationalist, an indefatigable worker, and an adroit politician. He will do honor to his District, and the State.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1865 offered a tantalizing temptation to a man as ambitious as Allison. The evidence shows that he wanted to run for the Senate in that year, but he accepted the advice of his true friends and thus saved his career. One false step here and his whole future might have been ruined. The setting of the drama is rather simple. In March, 1865, Senator James Harlan announced that he would resign from the Senate in order to accept appointment by President Lincoln as Secretary of the Interior.<sup>2</sup> The obvious sequel would have been for Governor William M. Stone to appoint ex-Governor Kirkwood (the leading Republican in Iowa, after Grimes and Harlan) to serve until the forthcoming election by the legislature in January, 1866. This would have given Kirkwood a natural advantage in the contest for the remaining years of the "short term" and for the succeeding full term as well. Governor Stone at first gave every indication that the appointment

<sup>1</sup> "Linkensale" [Lurton D. Ingersoll] in *Muscatine Journal*, reprinted in *Cedar Falls Gazette*, Jan. 15, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> The resignation was effective May 17, 1865. Shelby M. Cullom, *Fifty Years of Public Service* (Chicago, 1911), 135, says Harlan's appointment was due to the intercession of Bishop Matthew Simpson of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This reference is strengthened by the fact that Harlan had been a student at Asbury (now De Pauw) University, Greencastle, Indiana, at the time that Simpson had been president. See Johnson Brigham, *James Harlan* (Iowa City, 1913), 17, 30, 33, 36. Harry J. Carman and Reinhard H. Luthin, *Lincoln and the Patronage* (New York, 1943), 311, say that Elijah Sells, auditor of the Treasury Department, gave "powerful backing" to Harlan. They also say that President Lincoln conferred with Governor Yates and Senator Trumbull of Illinois "and others" regarding Harlan. They further point out that Harlan had come to have very close relations with the President: at the Second Inaugural he was Mrs. Lincoln's escort; Harlan's daughter, Mary, was often escorted by Robert Todd Lincoln, whom she later married; Harlan was at Lincoln's side when he made his last public address from the White House on April 11. Elijah Sells, an Iowan and a prominent fellow Methodist, had changed to the Post Office Department about the time the Harlan appointment was in the making. He was later rewarded by Harlan with appointment as Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Southern Agency.

would be forthcoming as a matter of course. Days lengthened into weeks, however, and the long-expected announcement did not materialize. To add to the confusion and excitement, Secretary Harlan soon tired of or saw the hopelessness of his position as a cabinet member under Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, from whom he was poles apart in politics. Rumors that Harlan wanted to return to the Senate began to float around.<sup>3</sup> His new interest was believed to be in the long term that would begin on March 4, 1867, leaving the remainder of his former term to someone else.

As the days dragged by almost every politician in Iowa, including Allison, was suspected of being an aspirant in the contest that was pretty much Kirkwood against the field. Governor Stone did not appoint Kirkwood, seemingly because his own fortunes demanded withholding the prize to use it as a trading point in securing votes for his own renomination for governor. Finally, Stone turned against Kirkwood outright.<sup>4</sup>

With all of this high and low politics in the air, it would have been very easy for Allison to slip into the contest on the grounds that the fortunes of his friend and benefactor, Kirkwood, were so uncertain. This was apparently what he almost allowed to happen. A letter to Kirkwood from Allison's own mentor, Jacob Rich, gives a view of the matter. Rich was the recently retired editor of the *Independence Buchanan County Guardian* and just beginning a long career as the chief strategist for the Grimes-Kirkwood-Allison faction of the Republican party. He wrote Kirkwood in March that the *Dubuque Times* had just "come out flowingly for Allison." He blamed this on W. S. Peterson, editor of the *Times*, who had induced newspapers in Delaware County and in Independence to follow suit. "All the best and wisest men" were for Kirkwood, not Allison, he continued. Shubael P. Adams, a Dubuque Republican, claimed that the movement was a "trick" started by another Dubuque Republican, E. C. David, but that it had no strength. Rich then continued:

<sup>3</sup> Howard K. Beale, *The Critical Year, A Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (New York, 1930), 64, 99-106, analyzes Harlan's dubious ethics in remaining as a member of Johnson's official family long after a difference of viewpoint had developed. Professor Beale's interpretation of Harlan is strengthened by a consideration of the Iowa senatorial politics involved in his actions.

<sup>4</sup> Dan Elbert Clark, *Samuel Jordan Kirkwood* (Iowa City, 1917), 305-306. The story is given in the same author's *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1912), 132-42; also, see W. M. Stone to William Penn Clarke, No. 127, *William Penn Clarke Correspondence* (Iowa State Dept. of History and Archives, Des Moines).



And not, you will understand, because we have anything against Allison. He is a splendid fellow, has made us a good representative, and is very popular with us. In almost anything else he could have the most cordial and earnest support of all of us. I would run my legs off to serve him in almost anything else, and others who are for you, and against this movement, would do the same. . . . I wrote Perkins, of the Cedar Falls Gazette, and he has come out for you instead of Allison, as Peterson requested. . . . If I thought Allison would really tolerate this movement, I should think it best for you to come up and do a little work, but otherwise it would not be necessary. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Kirkwood's correspondence reveals his awareness of Allison as a potential rival. Alonzo B. F. Hildreth of the Charles City *Intelligencer* was one of the most trusted leaders of this period. On March 27, Kirkwood wrote him of his interest and hopes for success:

It has for some time been understood that the Union men of your part of the State desire that their wishes shall be potential in the Senatorial question. . . . The resignation of Senator Harlan has precipitated the question, and I learn that my supposition and belief are both correct. Some of your people prefer Mr. Allison, basing their preferences mainly upon his locality. Others prefer some one else, although he may be outside their particular locality.

Kirkwood added that he did not want to tell Hildreth how he should vote, but hoped for his support.<sup>6</sup>

This letter from Kirkwood, which by the way is a perfect example of this type of political correspondence designed to feel out the sentiment of the leaders, elicited a long response from Hildreth. On April 1 he replied that he had just returned from Chicago, had stopped over in Dubuque, and had met Allison who had also just arrived.<sup>7</sup> Allison had assured him that the use

<sup>5</sup> Jacob Rich to Kirkwood, March 12, 1865, No. 958, *Samuel J. Kirkwood Correspondence* (Iowa State Dept. of History and Archives, Des Moines). W. S. Peterson, sometime editor of the Dubuque *Times*, retired from that position on January 18, 1866. See Cedar Falls *Gazette*, Jan. 19, 1866. Shubael P. Adams and E. C. David were prominent Republicans in Dubuque but not consistent supporters of Allison's political ambitions. Concerning Jacob A. Rich, see George E. Roberts, "The Career of Jacob Rich," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 13:165-74 (April, 1915). Henry A. Perkins and his more famous brother, George Douglas, were publishers of the Cedar Falls *Gazette* until 1866 when they took over the Sioux City *Journal*.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Aldrich, *The Life of Azro B. F. Hildreth* (Des Moines, 1891), 393-4.

<sup>7</sup> This statement, together with a newspaper story that Allison participated in the Lincoln memorial exercises at Dubuque on April 20, gives fairly good evidence that

of his name was without his knowledge or consent, and, after conferences, had promptly notified Stone that he was not a candidate. Hildreth's own idea was that Stone was merely playing a game, pretending to want the gubernatorial renomination, but actually desiring the Senate place for himself. He suspected Stone of wanting to appoint someone to fill the vacancy who would not be a candidate for the long term, leaving that open for himself. After comments on the strength of the north and south factions in the state's politics, Hildreth admitted that the Dubuque influence was strong in his district but that the "rural" leaders were tiring of the city's domination of the district. "They now have every good Government appointment but one, drawing salaries to themselves . . . of thirty or forty thousand dollars. And yet Dubuque City and County never voted the Republican ticket!" Editor Hildreth put the substance of this letter into an editorial just five days later. "There can be no doubt that Governor Stone had decided to appoint Col. Allison to the Senate for the purpose of securing votes for himself, for that office. That game [is] being blocked. . . ." <sup>8</sup> This would seem to indicate that in Hildreth's mind, Allison was the kind of appointee that Stone could safely put in without fear of rivalry for the long term.

It is only fair to add that at this same time Stone was writing to Kirkwood, reporting that he had seen the charges of the David conspiracy and the statements which accused Stone of being a party to the "movement." Stone ridiculed the whole idea, denied that he had made any promises, and assured Kirkwood that he was in no conspiracy. <sup>9</sup>

That Kirkwood took seriously the Allison prospects for the appointment is to be seen in the following letter to him from Jacob Rich:

Yours of the 29th ult. came to hand two or three days since. You argue with me the point respecting a concession of the short term to Col. A[llison] in case he recd the appointment. The case is hardly a practical one, in view of the action the Colonel has taken, but still I want to say a word about it. I did not see, Governor, how we could concede the short term without conceding away all our arguments. We did not urge your claims because you were a cleverer, more social, more companionable fellow than

Allison was not in Washington at the war's end and at the time of Lincoln's assassination.

<sup>8</sup> Azro B. F. Hildreth to Kirkwood, April 1, 1865, No. 961, *Kirkwood Correspondence*; Charles City *Intelligencer*, Apr. 6, 1865.

<sup>9</sup> Stone to Kirkwood, March 30, 1865, No. 960, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. Stone repudiated the story as given in the *West Union Record*, edited by Andrew J. Felt.

Allison, for we dont think you are. Nor because we liked you personally any better than the Colonel, for we dont. Nor because our interests, disconnected with the general interest, would be better served by you than him. You know the Colonel's excellent social characteristics, and know, also, that we could depend upon him for having our local interests subserved. But the ground we took, the only ground that we could take, the ground that it was our pride and strength to take, was that your selection was best for the public interests, for the State, and for the Nation. That at this time, particularly, it was incumbent upon us to put into such positions, the ablest, most practical men we have. In this was our whole argument, our whole strength. We could not concede to anyone else a portion of the time to be filled, without conceding this away. If Mr. Allison was the proper man for two years — for these two years to come, pregnant with great questions — he was the proper man for a longer term. If you should be in the Senate for six years from 1867, you ought to be there for the intervening time to 1867. . . .

I like Allison, Governor, as well as you, or any one, and I'm anxious that this whole matter should be fought right here, on his account. I knew it could not be best for him, and I wanted him to know that there was a good deal of uncertainty about it, so that he would not go into it at all. I knew that a good way to make him feel this, was to let him know that you were in the field for the short as well as the long term. I was afraid that a concession of the short term, with the appointment, might with the possibility of success for both terms, induce him to go into the contest. . . . And of one thing I am well satisfied, namely, *that the prompt and active efforts made by your friends*, has kept the Colonel out of the field and in that much simplified the contest, and made surer your success. . . .<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately we do not have Kirkwood's answer, but the contents must have been satisfactory, judging from Rich's reply. Writing on April 10, he says: "I was much pleased to have yours of the 6th tonight. . . . I am told confidentially that the Dubuque *Times* will be out for you within a few days, probably through Allison's influence. . . ." <sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Jacob Rich to Kirkwood, April 4, 1865, No. 964, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. Italics added. A short excerpt from this letter is given in Clark, *Kirkwood*, 307. The constant reference to Allison as "Colonel" may perplex the reader. It is an allusion to Allison's appointment in 1861 as an aide to Governor Kirkwood. He was given a title of "Lieutenant-Colonel of Volunteers."

<sup>11</sup> Rich to Kirkwood, April 10, 1865, No. 965, *Kirkwood Correspondence*.



The fight for the senatorship dragged on through the summer months. John A. Kasson, Representative in Congress from the Fifth District, was frequently mentioned for the office. Another candidate informed his friends of his willingness to accept the office, though admitting his lack of optimism. This timid soul was William Vandever, a prewar Congressman who had left Congress to enter the service. Now a brigadier general, Vandever apparently had a hard time in coming to a full realization of the changes in political fortunes since the days when he had left for the wars. If he now expected to return home and receive the acclaim and rewards of a hero, he soon found himself disillusioned. "A week or more ago," Rich wrote to Kirkwood, "I received a letter from Gen. Vandever dated Goldsboro, April 1st, on the subject of the Senatorship, and the General desires it understood that he is a candidate and wants me to write him as to the prospects." Vandever had also written to William Penn Clarke, but without betraying any such high hopes.<sup>12</sup> Rich's opinion of Vandever's chances was outlined in another letter to Kirkwood:

Your letter, enclosing that of the Gen. is this moment at hand. I am glad to find my ideas so much in accord with yours. . . . I have no idea that Vandever could secure any strength. Allison is infinitely more popular and what Allison could not do, Vandever can have no show of accomplishing. Bemis, Hart and myself will probably go to the Convention, perhaps others. I think we can influence the Dubuque delegation to a judicious course. . . .<sup>13</sup>

This "judicious course" undoubtedly meant the giving up of Allison and the support of Kirkwood.

Kirkwood had letters of support from Judge George G. Wright, Peter Melendy of Cedar Falls, and Annie Wittenmyer, Iowa's gift to the nursing corps, who now wrote from Washington with great political realism, urging Kirkwood to defeat Stone's renomination for governor so that he could not use that office as a steppingstone to the senatorship. For that matter, Stone wrote the famous "virtual promise" letter to Kirkwood on June 2. He would make the appointment, but not until after the convention.

I do not think it advisable for you to be at the State convention,

<sup>12</sup> Rich to Kirkwood, Apr. 30, 1865, No. 971, *ibid.*; Vandever to Clarke, *Clarke Correspondence*.

<sup>13</sup> Rich to Kirkwood, May 16, 1865, No. 973, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. George W. Bemis and L. W. Hart were Buchanan County legislators and politicians. Bemis was a representative in the 8th General Assembly, Hart in the 10th and 11th.



as it would help to give color to the assumption that there is a bargain and sale between us, and sway the friends of *other* gentlemen against me. . . . You will be Senator and I Governor again, if our friends understand each other, and are *prudent* and *discreet* in their management. . . .<sup>14</sup>

Far more important, to Kirkwood, was the assurance received from Secretary Harlan in July. Not yet an openly avowed candidate, Harlan wrote:

When I received yours of the 28th ult. I intended as soon as I could have sufficient time, to write a full statement of my understanding of the position of parties likely to come in competition with you for the office of Senator. . . . I therefore now write to say that as far as I know, my friends will support you for that place, and I do not doubt your election. I am not sure, however, but I would like to swap places with you after you have grown a little tired of a seat in the Senate, and feel like taking a little recreation in running after thieves that have been burrowing about this Department, and living under its protecting aegis in the states and territories. How would you like it? Please write me fully, frankly and if you choose in confidence. . . .<sup>15</sup>

A cabinet place and a senatorship were just two trifles to be traded back and forth at pleasure! Harlan may have written with a partial sense of humor, but before long he was showing his hand. On September 3, Jacob Rich reported to Kirkwood that he and Allison had gone to see the Secretary and both believed that he would now run for the long term. He added that Vandever was at home and a candidate but without strength; he had become "terribly obnoxious to pretty much everybody in Dubuque." As for Allison, he "assures me constantly that he has no aspirations and no hopes, and seems earnest enough for you. *I can't find that any one encourages him. . . .*" Another report on Harlan came from no less an observer than Senator Grimes, who wrote on September 27: "Harlan is here [Burlington] though I have not seen him. I am inclined to believe, from what I hear, that he wants the long term, that [Fitz Henry] Warren wants the short term. . . . I think it of vast importance that you go into Allison's district before election."<sup>16</sup>

The attitude of John A. Kasson is colorfully described by Charles C.

<sup>14</sup> Stone to Kirkwood, June 2, 1865, No. 979, *ibid*.

<sup>15</sup> Harlan to Kirkwood, July 18, 1865, No. 995, *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Rich to Kirkwood, Sept. 3, 1865, No. 1014; Grimes to Kirkwood, Sept. 27, 1865, *ibid*. Italics added.

Nourse, not altogether an objective observer in view of his belief that Kasson had knocked him out of a district attorneyship in favor of Caleb Baldwin. He closes a long letter to Kirkwood in this vein: "Kasson has not returned. He will not be an *open* candidate but will be on hand to play McCawber in case there is any close contest about it."<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, Stone had won renomination for the governorship, and at the election in October had been re-elected by a 16,000 majority. This was a considerable decline over his vote in the 1863 election, which he had won by a 38,000 majority. The state of alarm among Republicans over the post-war turn against them is evident from comment by one of their leaders, Colonel George Cartie Tichenor of Des Moines. Colonel Tichenor was a Kentuckian transplanted to Iowa, a War Democrat who had come over into the Republican party "with flaming sword," to use his own flamboyant expression that so perfectly expresses his personality, and he had acquired a position as aide-de-camp on the staff of General Grenville M. Dodge. Like Jacob Rich, Tichenor was just now beginning a long career as a scout, reporter, and manager for the Grimes-Kirkwood-Allison wing of the party. He wrote of his disappointment in the decreased Republican vote in the elections of 1865 and the need for hard and shrewd work if the party's program were to be saved.<sup>18</sup>

Stone had not lived up to his "virtual promise" to Kirkwood to appoint him for the short term, so it became evident that both short and long terms would be decided upon by the General Assembly in January, 1866, uninfluenced by the effect of an appointment. Allison gave Kirkwood one of the last reports he received before the senatorial election finally took place. Writing from Dubuque on November 4, he says:

As to senatorial question I have nothing of special moment that is new. The quid nuncs have many speculations on the subject. It is believed here that Gen'l Vandever is a candidate, and I think Brush is for long or short term. I think most of those elected [to the state legislature] in my district are for you. . . .

Hubbard I see is announced but I am well satisfied it is without his consent. I have heard also that Gen'l Warren is a candidate for the short term. My own impression is you will have no diffi-

<sup>17</sup> Nourse to Kirkwood, Oct. 21, 1865, No. 1031, *ibid.* Charles C. Nourse was a distinguished attorney of Des Moines. Caleb Baldwin was an attorney from Council Bluffs.

<sup>18</sup> Tichenor to Kirkwood, Oct. 24, 1865, No. 1034, *ibid.*

culty if Mr. Harlan is not a candidate. If he is I think he might become formidable. Some of our papers are talking of a Northern [Iowa] man, which could be well enough if we could unite. But I think this not possible from what I learn. I would be glad to know how matters look below & what your information is. Will Gov. Stone appoint? It might be important to have a full representation [in Congress] in the beginning, as from present appearances the earnest men ought to be in full force in both branches. I expect to leave about the 21st. I would like very much to see you but cannot come to Iowa City. Let me hear from you. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Shortly after Allison wrote the above letter, the rumors that Harlan actually was a candidate for the long term gave way to certainty. By late November it was generally accepted that Harlan and his friends were working for the senatorship. Kirkwood's chances for the long term immediately declined, since Harlan had a strong and loyal following throughout the state.

Another new factor in the race was the promotion of the candidacy of General Grenville M. Dodge by some of his former staff members. The political genius of Colonel Tichenor began to emerge at this time; another leader of the future, Colonel Cyrus C. Carpenter of Fort Dodge, also began to capitalize on his military connections by going in for politics. Both of them urged General Dodge to run for the Senate. Carpenter was apparently trying to head off General Vandever, Tichenor to get revenge on Kasson. Another who had strong leanings toward Dodge was Herbert M. Hoxie of Des Moines, United States Marshal for Iowa and now holder of a Credit Mobilier contract. In reporting to T. C. Durant, the railroad promoter who was much interested in Iowa and Nebraska politics, Hoxie estimated Harlan's strength to be the greatest, Kirkwood's next, and after them Kasson and Hubbard with rank uncertain. "General Dodge would be strong and I think with proper effort could come in if Harlan should not be elected on first ballot, which he cant be. . . . I want to see you before I do much in the Senatorial matter."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Allison to Kirkwood, Nov. 4, 1865, No. 2477, *ibid.* Asahel W. Hubbard of Sioux City was Congressman from the 6th District. Professor F. A. Brush was sometime faculty member and president of Upper Iowa University, Fayette.

<sup>20</sup> Carpenter to Dodge, Dec. 1, 1865, *Dodge Personal Biography*, II, 442; Tichenor to Dodge, Nov. 13, 1865, *ibid.*, 437; Tichenor to Dodge, Nov. 29, 1865, Box 11, *Dodge Papers*. Tichenor says of Kasson: "He treated me shabbily and I shall pay him off at all hazzards [sic]." Hoxie to T. C. Durant, Dec. 21, 1865, Box 11, *Dodge*



Jacob Rich was so confident of Kirkwood's election that he wrote Kirkwood that he had gone to Washington to accept a clerkship which Grimes had obtained for him and which Allison wanted him to accept.<sup>21</sup> Another Kirkwood supporter, Shubael P. Adams, was Allison's Republican rival in Dubuque. He wrote to warn Kirkwood to expect a "General Conference of the Methodist Church in Des Moines about the time the Legislature meets," an obvious dig at Harlan's supporters among Methodist preachers.<sup>22</sup>

Kirkwood's greatest assurances came from no less a leader and pillar of strength than Senator Grimes himself. In a series of letters from Washington, Grimes informed Kirkwood of the pro-Harlan efforts being made from that center and furnished him with facts for use in his campaign, although holding him to secrecy as to the source of the information. Some letters were sent from Burlington, the home of Fitz Henry Warren, a strong Harlan man and also a strong Warren man. The letters began in September and continued until the election in January, 1866. A few sentences chosen from each letter will illustrate the attitude of Grimes. Early in October he wrote:

I am not sure that there is to be an effort on the part of the gentleman named to secure the long term. I have discovered no evidence of it since I wrote you. I hear from all quarters that you are the "coming man" & I think there can be no trouble about your election. . . . See every member possible and not only secure their pledges but prepare their minds to resist the machinations of F. H. W. [Fitz Henry Warren] who will be sure to propose all sorts of trades, & *dickers* with everybody. . . . Make no trade with any mortal. The people are for you for both the long & short term and insist upon having both. . . . Do no fail to have

*Papers.* The *Grenville M. Dodge Papers* are at the Iowa State Dept. of History and Archives, Des Moines.

<sup>21</sup> Rich to Kirkwood, Nov. 21, 1865, No. 1081, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. Senator Grimes was chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs. It is of great value in the appraisal of Allison to note this tie-up with Grimes. Rich was elated over the job, with its pay of \$6.00 per day and the opportunities it afforded for instruction in national and world affairs.

<sup>22</sup> Adams to Kirkwood, Dec. 2, 1865, No. 1097, *ibid.* As to Harlan's connections with and support from the Methodists of Iowa, it is important to note the frequent allusions to the subject in this campaign, years before the topic would become sensationally publicized in the "Newman Letter" episode of 1871. In addition to his connections with Iowa Wesleyan College at Mount Pleasant, Senator Harlan had been chosen to preside over the centennial celebration at New York City of the existence of Methodism in this country. See *Cedar Falls Gazette*, Feb. 9, 1866.



a large outside delegation of your friends at Des Moines . . . and let as many of them be military men as possible. . . .<sup>23</sup>

About a week later — earlier than most newspapers carried the news of Harlan's candidacy — Grimes wrote:

It is now quite certain that Mr. Harlan is a candidate . . . for the long term. It is so given out by authority. I suppose you have heard that the Hawkeye [Burlington newspaper] has been bought by Beardsley, Postmaster at Oskaloosa & proprietor of the Herald & Edwards also Postmaster at Mt Pleasant & proprietor of the Home Journal. They paid a large price (\$17,000) and the understanding is that it was bought in Harlan's interest, both the proprietors are Methodists & the Methodist church is his strong card & always has been. . . . Now my good friend, "stir your stumps" & go into view. I have no hostility to Harlan — I advised him not to leave the Senate, but when he did leave it & voluntarily pledged himself to you & thus induced you to become a candidate for his succession I think fair play entitles you to the place.<sup>24</sup>

Two weeks later Grimes had further information on Harlan:

The indications now are that Harlan will not leave the cabinet. Johnson is acting better since the Oct. Election & will not be so desirous of getting rid of him & some others & Harlan evidently thinks so for he has just bought one of the very best houses in Washington & paid \$30,000 for it. It seems to me that he would have hardly made so large an investment in property of that kind if he had not felt that he had a pretty long lease on office in Washington.<sup>25</sup>

By December the picture had changed again:

[Harlan] evidently has his heart set upon being returned to the Senate & is moving heaven & earth to accomplish that object. I have let him know exactly what I think about it. Sells & two or three Methodist preachers are traversing the state in his behalf at this moment. Between us he seems to be beside himself. . . . My

<sup>23</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, Oct. 4, 1865, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. This and the several letters following are reprinted in "Letters of James W. Grimes," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 22:469-504, 556-88 (October, 1941, January, 1942). This letter appears on p. 578.

<sup>24</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, Oct. 12, 1865, "Letters of James W. Grimes," 579. "Beardsley" is misspelled as "Bamsdley." Dr. Charles Beardsley became a leading citizen of Burlington and of Iowa. See Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . . (4 vols., New York, 1903), 4:300.

<sup>25</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, Oct. 28, 1865, "Letters of James W. Grimes," 580.

fears are that a rally being made of the Methodist Church in his behalf it may eventuate in a split of our party, but should that be so, I cannot but regard Harlan as responsible for it. I regret this *imbroglio* very much for I have always been & am yet a friend of Harlan, and under ordinary circumstances would support him, but I could not honorably do it were I in Iowa after what occurred between us last spring. . . .<sup>26</sup>

On the eve of the election in January, Grimes wrote the most revealing letter of all:

The delegation in Cong. stand about this way. All are against Harlan. All but Kasson were for you when last heard from, but each one of them has a hankering for the place & fancies that in some event or other he may be the possible man. But no one of them gives attention to any ambitious aspirations & when they left here all professed to be friendly to you with the exception before stated, though no one of them cares to speak very loud on the subject on account of the tremendous patronage of the Interior Department.

It is amusing to read the Iowa Harlan newspapers. So far from the Department being forced upon him, he sought it & he desired me to urge his appointment upon the Presdt. I did so [and] urged every possible reason for it & it was to me the Presdt. made the promise that he should be appointed. *It was when I communicated to him the Presdts. reply that he told me he & his friends would support you for his successor.* I am now reluctantly constrained to believe that he never intended to do so & that he only desired a place in the cabinet in order to strengthen himself for a re-election by its patronage. There are divers facts all tending to draw me to this conclusion. I confess myself deceived in Harlan. I always thought him a straight forward, guileless man of fair ability & of respectable standing, who, though he might not do any extraordinarily wise things, would not do any very foolish things. He is now the topic of conversation here. He has bought & paid \$30,000 for a house, it has not cost less than \$12,000 to \$15,000 to furnish it & it will cost \$20,000 a year to support it. Every one is asking how Harlan became rich so suddenly & the inquiry is accompanied by all sorts of grimaces, winks, nods & gestures. But all these things & many others you have heard from others.

The idea that is attempted to be propagated that he is not a candidate from choice but is made such by his friends is the worst nonsense in the world. You of course understood that. It is due

<sup>26</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, Dec. 2, 1865, *ibid.*, 581-2.

Harlan that I should say that I do not believe him, notwithstanding all that is said about him here just now, to be a dishonest man. In my opinion his wife has been playing the fool & betraying him into follies that his own judgment must condemn. I hear it said that she has been speculating with cotton agents & as their partner & I am inclined to think it to be so. Sells has been here four or five weeks but carefully avoided me. His son is deeply interested in Indian contracts in his superintendency it is charged & not denied. Cooley professes to have insisted that he should withdraw from the partnership, but he is doubtless as much interested as ever. I think Wilson takes the same view that you do. I shall show him your letter when he returns."<sup>27</sup>

A few days later Grimes wrote again:

Wilson [James F. Wilson of Fairfield] has just returned to Washington & I have handed him your letter to read. He has no idea of being a candidate against you & authorized me to say so to you. All of the members in Cong. from Iowa so far as I can learn are of the opinion that Harlan ought not to be a candidate and I have had no hesitation in saying always that good faith if nothing else should restrain him. The pressure in his behalf proceeds from the patronage, present & prospective of the Interior Department and is used by Indian agents, Indian contractors, office holders & office seekers of one kind & another. The letters we see published in the Iowa papers giving an account of the public demand that he should be returned to the Senate proceed from two or three clerks in his employ & are laughed at here as being most excellent jokes.<sup>28</sup>

Another interesting letter is from a new recruit to the Grimes-Wilson-

<sup>27</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, Jan. 2, 1866, No. 1136, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. Elijah Sells, Sr., was Secretary of State in Iowa from 1856 to 1863. Elijah Sells, Jr., became a superintendent of an Indian reservation by appointment of Secretary Harlan. "Cooley" was Dennis N. Cooley, Allison's law partner but later rival and opponent in politics. He became Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1865 on Harlan's recommendation. (See *Andrew Johnson Papers*, Book 66, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.) "Wilson" is James F. Wilson of Fairfield. Brigham, *James Harlan*, 215, refers to Grimes's suspicions of Harlan but does not do justice to the extent of the accusations made by Grimes; neither does he mention the suspicion of Mrs. Harlan and of Elijah Sells, Jr., and Cooley as Indian contractors. I cannot avoid the conclusion that Brigham glossed over the matter and left it with this statement: ". . . but [Grimes] believed it was due the Secretary to say that in his opinion the charges of dishonesty which this purchase [of the house] had occasioned were groundless." Careful comparison will show that this is not what Grimes said.

<sup>28</sup> Grimes to Kirkwood, Jan. 7, 1866, No. 1139, *Kirkwood Correspondence*, and "Letters of James W. Grimes," 586-7. Wilson's favor to Kirkwood in not running against him was returned by Kirkwood in 1881-1882.



Kirkwood machine, one Colonel David B. Henderson, a real hero just returned from the wars. He had lost a leg at Shiloh, but this had not prevented him from re-entering the army for a second hitch of service. Colonel Henderson, now a young attorney in the Dubuque office of Bissell and Shiras, began his career as a lawyer-politician by reporting to Kirkwood on one of his (Kirkwood's) minor rivals, a certain Professor F. A. Brush of Fayette, sometime president of Upper Iowa University. Henderson pointed out that all north Iowa should concentrate its support for Kirkwood; also, he reported that "Col. Allison" had written him that all Washington believed Harlan to be a candidate for the long term. This is the first concrete evidence of the functioning of the political partnership of Allison and Henderson.<sup>29</sup>

Kirkwood's own claims were stated in a letter to General Grenville M. Dodge, written on December 16, 1865:

I have intended writing you for some time. . . . I am a candidate for the U. S. Senate and would be glad of your support. I understand from Mr. Clark who saw you at St. Louis, that your first preference would probably be for Mr. Kasson. I think Mr. Kasson cannot be elected and that the "fight" will be between Mr. Harlan and I. I think Mr. Harlan should stay where he is. He left the Senate voluntarily. He can be of service to the State where he is and another can fill his place in the Senate. Why should we loose [sic] the benefit of having a cabinet minister from our State merely to enable him to go back to a place he voluntarily abandoned. I say nothing with regard to Mr. Kasson for two reasons: 1st, I suppose from what I have heard you prefer him, and 2nd, he and I are not on friendly terms.<sup>30</sup>

Thus we see pretty nearly the whole picture of Iowa Republican politics in the postwar period taking shape over this senatorial contest. Grimes, Kirkwood, Wilson, Allison, Henderson, Dodge, Rich, and Tichenor were in one camp of Republicans; Harlan, Warren, Clarke, Cooley, Sells *et al.*, were in the other. John Adam Kasson, in many ways the ablest of them all, was never wholly accepted by either faction but usually was forced to favor the Harlan group because ultimately he was totally repudiated by the other camp. The above-quoted letter from Kirkwood to Dodge indicates that Gen-

<sup>29</sup> Henderson to Kirkwood, Dec. 12, 1865, No. 1121, *Kirkwood Correspondence*.

<sup>30</sup> Kirkwood to Dodge, Dec. 16, 1865, may be found in *Dodge Personal Biography*, II, 444, in *Dodge Papers*.



eral Dodge had not yet fully made up his mind to "ditch" Kasson. After all, Kasson was still a member of Congress and could be very useful on occasion.<sup>31</sup> Kasson's own position is stated in his letter to General Dodge of January 12, 1866:

Yours of the 7th is rec'd. I am not a candidate for Senator since Jan. 1st. From the moment you were announced I foresaw no success for the West [i. e., the "western slope" as the southwest corner of Iowa was frequently called by its inhabitants] with a divided front. If our party does not moderate its tone, as against the President, we become divided, & our supremacy is lost for years to come. I have not one word or act to retract. My action has been for the best interest of party & country, as the future will show. . . .<sup>32</sup>

On the eve of the election the anti-Harlan people were still hoping for some turn of fortune that would enable General Dodge or any anti-Harlan or anti-Kasson man to emerge as the winner.<sup>33</sup> But such was not to be the case. Harlan was the choice of 63 members of the legislature for the long term; Kirkwood could get only 42, and A. W. Hubbard 12. Kirkwood and his friends had to be consoled with a whopping vote of 80 for the short term. The learned editor of the *Cedar Falls Gazette* commented that this result should be pleasing, as Harlan was "a bold radical and therefore a fitting representative of an Iowa constituency," a comment that was echoed years later by the first professional historian to study this subject. In his judgment, "There can be little doubt, however, but that the result was eminently satisfactory to a majority of the Republicans of Iowa, for James Harlan had won for himself great popularity by his course in the Senate during the momentous years preceding the Civil War."<sup>34</sup>

The crucial point that was not sensed by these commentators was the role of the Harlan-Kirkwood contest as a divisive factor in Iowa Republicanism. From this time forward there was to be a struggle unto the death, politically speaking, until one faction or the other had triumphed. Kirkwood was only

<sup>31</sup> Statement to the author by Professor Edward Younger whose biography of Kasson will be published by the State Historical Society of Iowa. The author wishes to express his deep gratitude to Professor Younger for the privilege of reading his manuscript.

<sup>32</sup> Kasson to Dodge, Jan. 12, 1866, Box 12, *Dodge Papers*.

<sup>33</sup> Caleb Baldwin to N. P. Dodge, Jan. 11, 1866, Box 12, *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> *Cedar Falls Gazette*, Jan. 19, 1866; Clark, *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa*, 142.

a symbol: the real contest was between the Harlan faction on the one side and on the other a faction that will have to be called the Grimes-Kirkwood-Wilson-Allison-Dodge faction, with General Grenville Mellen Dodge quickly developing as the "boss" and Jacob Rich and George C. Tichenor as the managers. To this group we may conveniently refer henceforth as "Dodge & Co."

This factionalism was not as clear in 1865-1866 as later, but it can be seen in the anti-Harlan comments in the Grimes letters, quoted above, and in the following "battle report" made by Tichenor to his superior, General Dodge. Only the most pertinent sentences can be given here, as the letter is a very long one.

The senatorial contest is over and Harlan is elected for the long term and Kirkwood for the short. A most unfortunate result especially as far as Harlan is concerned and one that might have been easily avoided by timely action. Had Kasson withdrawn two weeks before and you been placed on the track with your friends to work properly you could have been elected almost unanimously. As it was, Kasson kept himself on until the *very hour of the caucus*, and of course by so doing, kept your name from being presented and your friends from doing one thing for you.

This [Fifth] District was ready to unite in a body on you but could not do so while Kasson claimed that you would not be a candidate against him. And although it was claimed three or four days before the caucus that the District would refuse to present Kasson yet he did not formally decline or recommend the support of any other man, hence, the District was left to go by default. And the representatives as a general thing as a choice of evils, voted sullenly for Harlan.

Thus has Kasson's course *defeated you and elected Harlan*. Harlan only beat Kirkwood in fact by eight votes. These votes were from this District as Harlan got 15 out of 21 votes of the District. So you see this District decided the contest and had it been united on you the vote would have been at a deadlock and after two or three ballots you would have had Kirkwood's and Hubbard's entire vote and much of Harlan's. *This I know*. You stood with twice the popularity with the members of either Harlan or Kirkwood. With things as they were, we did all we could for Kirkwood, but with this town and Kasson's influence against him and the bribery and promises made by Sells and others for Harlan, we could do nothing. . . .<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, Jan. 14, 1866, Box 12, *Dodge Papers*.

Dodge's army status also came into the political discussions. Apparently Dodge's original intention was to leave the service in January, 1866, but on January 14 he telegraphed Kasson to see General Grant and the President and arrange a postponement to April 7, the effective date of his resignation, giving personal reasons. Kasson quickly arranged the matter as Dodge wanted it. Not even Dodge's lieutenant, Tichenor, much less the general public, was aware that Dodge was arranging all this to suit his own convenience, actually to facilitate his transfer from the army to the employ of the Union Pacific Railroad as Chief Engineer. It appeared that he was being released, whereas other Iowa generals such as Samuel R. Curtis and John M. Corse were being retained. Dodge answered Tichenor's inquiries with a full explanation, to which Tichenor responded as follows:

I have your letter . . . and am much gratified to learn the facts in regard to your muster out. There was a universal surprise & indignation here of your many friends at it. Especially as Curtis & Corse were retained. Curtis was here at the time . . . & blowed [sic] like a steam engine over it, trying to create the impression that you did not stand, as your friends pretended, in favor with Grant, Sherman & the authorities. He did not say so directly but by inuendo. I took pains to nail all such impressions. . . .

I am almost confident that Harlan sought to have you mustered out in time to operate on the senatorial question for I know that many of his friends here during the contest did all in their power to disparage you. Kirkwood is posted on this fully and will fight for you night & day in anything and for anything you may ask & with him you can whip all opposition that Harlan or his friends can bring. . . . Write Kirkwood freely. . . . I can if you desire have a resolution passed in the Legislature endorsing your Indian policy and recommending that the control of Indian matters be transferred from the Interior to the War Department. Such a resolution should also be passed in the Nebraska & Colorado Legislatures and if possible in the Missouri General Assembly. . . . Curtis, Harlan & others of that stripe see that you are growing into a popularity in the state that threatens to be disastrous to them & they will injure you if they can — but just keep cool — see that your friends are posted and you are all right. *You have more friends and more valuable friends than you can imagine — more than any man in the State from the Army.* . . .<sup>36</sup>

Thus we see that Tichenor, using suspicion rather than proof, was culti-

<sup>36</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, Jan. 23, 1866, *ibid.*



vating a prejudice in Dodge's mind against Harlan which Kirkwood had already initiated. Harlan's biographer, Johnson Brigham, admits the senatorial episode was the beginning of the break with Grimes and Kirkwood; the account as given here expands the scope of the conflict. Brigham admits of only one possible misdeed on the part of Harlan: he erred in forgetting his promise to Kirkwood, ". . . if, indeed, he had definitely promised to support Kirkwood for the long term." He says he was told by Charles Aldrich that Kirkwood was motivated in part by animosity toward Elijah Sells, Harlan's manager, who had incurred Kirkwood's displeasure during the war. Brigham brushes aside the charges of Harlan's reliance upon Methodist support; Kirkwood's biographer, Dan E. Clark, gives little space to the case against Harlan.<sup>37</sup>

The senatorial election of January, 1866, was only a part of the exciting and crucial developments of that year. Iowa politics in the remainder of 1866 well illustrates the description, the "critical year," with its struggle for power between Radical and Conservative Republicans,<sup>38</sup> but this was only one phase of such politics in Iowa. The primary struggle was a contest of pure factionalism — a raw struggle for power — between the Harlanites and "Dodge & Co.," neither camp being able to complain of the other's Radicalism. This struggle, in which the Harlanites were momentarily victorious in 1866, was destined to go on until Harlan was personally defeated in 1872 and forever after denied any political reward, any share however slight in the distribution of elective offices. During the next twenty-five years he more than once aspired to be governor or senator, but the door was always shut in his face. It might be added that one of the counts against General James B. Weaver in 1875 was his pro-Harlanism; this contributed to his defeat followed by his ultimate departure from the Republican party.<sup>39</sup>

In 1866 four of the six members of the Iowa congressional delegation were considered acceptable to "Dodge & Co." At least they were not seriously opposed within their own party. These were James F. Wilson, Hiram Price, Allison, and Asahel W. Hubbard. John A. Kasson, for all his amenability to Dodge's wishes, was deemed insufficiently Radical, and yet no less an opponent than Dodge himself was required to deprive Kasson of renomination to Congress in 1866. The other Congressman who was denied a re-

<sup>37</sup> Brigham, *Harlan*, 221, 372, note 301; Clark, *Kirkwood*, 303-310.

<sup>38</sup> Beale, *Critical Year*, *passim*.

<sup>39</sup> Sage, "Weaver in Allison's Way . . .," *passim*.



nomination was Josiah B. Grinnell of the Fourth District. Whatever the reason or reasons, it was definitely not the one advanced by his biographer, namely, the refusal of Grinnell to fight back when attacked by a Kentucky Congressman, General Lovell H. Rousseau, in Washington.<sup>40</sup> This could not have been the reason, because the attack did not take place until several days after the district congressional convention had nominated Judge William Loughridge of Oskaloosa by a vote of 88 to 69. Loughridge's speech of acceptance emphasized two points: his intense Radicalism, and his readiness to resign whenever anyone might find fault with his policies.<sup>41</sup>

The next few years in Allison's political career reveal his increasing stature as legislator and businessman. In his second term in Congress he was appointed to the Ways and Means Committee, by common consent the most important in the House. Here he had a chance to associate closely with the ablest men in the House and in all the governmental circles in Washington. The House had a membership of some 200 at this time, in contrast to the present 435, and it was possible to know intimately many of the members if one were so inclined, and Allison certainly was so inclined. He was a consistent supporter of all basic Reconstruction legislation, but most of all he was an expert and tireless "leg man" for promoters of railroads. Just where the line should be drawn between proper and improper activity in this area it would be hard to say. Undoubtedly the ethical standards of those days were not high. Allison was up to his ears in this kind of work, and his papers show that he was an investor and speculator as well as a mere public-spirited agent for others.

Among his closest associates and frequent correspondents were Henry L. Stout, Platt Smith, F. W. H. Sheffield, R. A. Babbage, Rufus E. and Julius K. Graves, all bankers and railroad promoters of Dubuque; Samuel Hooper, Boston financier and fellow-Congressman; Oakes Ames of Credit Mobilier fame; Morris K. Jesup, a heavy investor in the units that became the Illinois Central Railroad from Dubuque to Sioux City; and John I. Blair of the

<sup>40</sup> Charles E. Payne, *Josiah Bushnell Grinnell* (Iowa City, 1938), 231. See also, Cyrenus Cole, *A History of the People of Iowa* (Cedar Rapids, 1921), 380, and *Iowa Through the Years* (Iowa City, 1940), 315, where this same error is repeated.

<sup>41</sup> Oskaloosa *Herald*, June 14, 1866, tells of the convention; the succeeding weekly issue tells of the Rousseau attack. For extensive notes on these articles I am indebted to Miss Kay Kilpatrick of Oskaloosa. L. F. Parker, "Josiah Bushnell Grinnell," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 2:249-59 (January, 1896), refers (p. 257) to the Rousseau assault on Grinnell but says nothing of its effect on the loss of the nomination. Parker was Grinnell's floor manager at the convention.

North Western.<sup>42</sup> Allison is said to have been offered the presidency of the Illinois Central and the managership of the Jay Cooke interests in Washington. He was the president of the Dunleith and Dubuque Bridge Company that built the bridge still used by the Illinois Central in crossing the Mississippi, and he negotiated with Andrew Carnegie for the steel used in that project.

In only one area was he at odds with the majority of his party: he was definitely a moderate in his tariff views. In these years began the friendship and intimate correspondence with such economic liberals as David A. Wells, Edward A. Atkinson, Horace White, and Whitelaw Reid, the kind of economic and political liberals who later helped to form the Liberal Republican party. Truly, Allison was able to win and keep friends in both camps of Republicanism while maintaining his own Radicalism beyond doubt.

His renomination to the House in 1864 and 1866 seemed to come without a question; in 1868 he was mildly tested by a local rebellion led by his own business associate, Julius K. Graves, an insurgency seemingly explainable only in terms of Graves's own insatiable ambition and illusions of power based on his rapidly growing railroad and mining fortune. The rebellion was easily beaten down; neither this nor later political differences were ever allowed to alter their personal and business relations.

In 1868-1869 Allison and his colleague, James F. Wilson, came dangerously near real trouble in their mixture of business and politics. Briefly stated, it was charged that the two used their influence to secure a change in the route of the Sioux City & Pacific Railroad. The original chartering act called for a continuation of the road in a westerly direction until it would intersect the Pacific Railroad running from Council Bluffs. By their activity, Allison and Wilson secured permission to run the line south and southeasterly from Sioux City, on the Iowa side of the Missouri River, until it intersected the John I. Blair road at California Junction, just west of the town of Missouri Valley; thus, the Sioux City road would act as a feeder to the Blair road instead of developing the country beyond Sioux City, as the original route would have done if used, and the road would not follow the most direct route to the point of intersection with the main line to the Pacific, as the original law specified.

<sup>42</sup> Allison's associations with these men are indicated by many letters in Box 5 of the *William B. Allison Papers* (Iowa State Dept. of History and Archives, Des Moines).

At first glance this may seem to have been an act of service to Iowa as against Nebraska and therefore deserving of gratitude from Iowans. But the key question was, why did Allison and Wilson work to secure the change of route? Were they unselfishly serving Iowa or were they serving someone else — for a price? It happened that both men were stockholders in the Blair road; it was now charged that they had been given the stock by John I. Blair in return for their services. Both men indignantly denied the charge in the closing days of the 40th Congress, Allison going so far as to name his assailant as Lewis A. Thomas of Dubuque, whom he contemptuously dismissed as an Independent Republican candidate against him in 1868 who had received only 149 votes.<sup>43</sup> Blair was quoted with great finality, as if he were an impartial witness, to the effect that each man had regularly subscribed to stock purchases and had paid the installments due. A famous contemporary journalist, "Gath," fulminated against the two, especially Wilson, whom he called the "singed cat," but without much success. Allison had already been safely re-elected to Congress for a fourth term, and Wilson had voluntarily made way for a new candidate in 1868. Strange to say, the matter was never officially investigated, but it was a great talking point against Allison in 1871-1872, when he was campaigning against Senator Harlan. Allison later testified in the Credit Mobilier hearings of 1873 that he had been under fire in 1868, both for the nomination and the election, for mixing his railroad activities with politics and therefore he had surrendered his Credit Mobilier stock so as not to add that to his difficulties. The only court that ever considered these charges against Allison was the electorate of Iowa, and it had a full opportunity to canvass them over and over as he stood for re-election for his six terms in the Senate. This court of public opinion, acting indirectly, to be sure, through the legislature, held him not guilty. Thus might he feel well vindicated. Charges of this nature were still being hurled against him as late as 1906 in one of the famous muckraking "Treason of the Senate" articles by David Graham Phillips.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Neither man ever denied that he had used his influence to get the route changed. *Congressional Globe*, 40 Cong., 3 Sess. (Feb. 23, 1869), 1466-7.

<sup>44</sup> George Alfred Townsend ["Gath"], *Washington Outside and Inside* (Hartford, Chicago, and Cincinnati, 1873), 400-454, a reprint of some of Gath's post-Civil War correspondence, gives a very critical view of Allison and Wilson. The 1871 charges are best followed in the Burlington *Hawk-Eye* and the Sioux City *Journal*. The "Poland Report," *House Report No. 77*, 42 Cong., 3 Sess. (Feb. 18, 1873), 304-308, contains Allison's testimony about his purchase and return of Credit Mobilier stock. On "Gath" see C. D. Abbott, "George Alfred Townsend," *Dictionary of*



By 1869 a new situation had arisen in Iowa politics. Senator Grimes had gone to Europe in search of health. His vote against the conviction of Andrew Johnson had destroyed his position of leadership in Iowa and had brought down upon his head attacks more vicious than those against the President. His term in the Senate would expire in 1871; the stroke which had sent him abroad for rest and convalescence made it almost a certainty that he would not again be a candidate. Since the legislature that would meet in January, 1870, would elect a Senator to succeed Grimes, his resignation before his term had expired would mean that the lawmakers would again have the task of choosing two men — one for the unexpired term, one for the regular term. Thus the short and long term problem of 1866 was to be repeated.

Iowa politicians did not languish in a state of masterly inactivity while awaiting definite word on Grimes's intentions. That restless soul, Colonel Tichenor, was the first to raise the question of the succession. In his most forthright style he sent a letter to his chief, General Dodge, which was at once an invitation and a challenge.

Is Jim [James F.] Wilson going to make a fight for Senator [?] I see *your* name mentioned in a number of papers. . . . Judge Wright [George Grover Wright of Des Moines] is a *very* anxious candidate and as our nominating convention meets in a few days I want to know your wishes. We can control the legislative nominations in this county if necessary but I don't care to make a fight against Wright unless you or Jim Wilson are interested. I can also do something in the matter of legislative nominations in Guthrie, Dallas, Greene, Adair & several other counties but have no relish for the work unless it be to serve you or Wilson. . . . I tell you that if Jim Wilson is going to be a candidate for Senator he had better see to it that [General John M.] Hedrick is not appointed Special Mail Agent unless he pledges himself in writing to support him. . . .<sup>45</sup>

It was under these circumstances that Dodge, prodded by Tichenor, wrote two letters to Wilson. Just what Dodge said is not and can never be known because the Wilson Papers were not preserved. The contents of his letters

*American Biography*, 18:616-17. Wilson later happily reported to Dodge that Townsend's contract with the *Chicago Tribune* would soon expire. For the David Graham Phillips' article, see *The Cosmopolitan*, 41:627-32 (October, 1906).

<sup>45</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, Apr. 14, 1869, Box 16, *Dodge Papers*. General John M. Hedrick of Ottumwa was for many years editor of the *Ottumwa Courier*. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . ., 4:124-5.



can be easily reconstructed, however, from the wording of Wilson's reply. Allison might well have thought of this as the most important letter ever written by or about himself.

I have a taste now of the independence of private life and I don't think I will give it up soon. I will not be a candidate for the Senate. Can you get Tichenor to stick a few pins for Allison [?] I don't think we ought to send an inexperienced man to succeed Grimes. . . .<sup>46</sup>

In view of the tenor of the entire Dodge-Wilson-Allison-Tichenor correspondence, it is easy to supply the line of reasoning running through Wilson's mind. The term, "inexperienced man," would be readily understood by all of "Dodge & Co." An "inexperienced" man meant one who knew nothing about putting through Congress the plans and projects of Iowans and their friends; one who had no contacts with the Chief Executive and the Departments and no facility at making them; one who knew nothing about keeping a watchful eye on the Supreme Court.

Wilson was the perfect man for such work and was the natural choice for senatorial spokesman for "Dodge & Co." He had had a distinguished career in the House since 1861 and easily stood first in the Iowa delegation. A study of the speeches made by the members from Iowa shows that he stood head and shoulders above any other Iowan of the sixties except John A. Kasson. A brilliant lawyer, he had served on the Judiciary Committee and had helped to draft the Thirteenth Amendment. He had also helped to draw up the articles of impeachment of President Johnson and had served on the House Board of Managers during the trial. He had had much experience as a railroad promoter and investor and was one of the government directors of the Union Pacific Railroad; he was a bank president and a large buyer of securities; last, but not least, he was an effective writer and a forceful stump speaker. All in all, there was not an abler man in Iowa politics.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> James F. Wilson to Dodge, Apr. 22, 1869, Box 16, *Dodge Papers*.

<sup>47</sup> Professor Earle D. Ross of Iowa State College has done an excellent sketch of Wilson in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20:331-3. His original manuscript dealt with Wilson's career in much greater detail than appears in the published form. The brief biography of Wilson that appears in the *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927* (Washington, D. C., 1928), is strangely full of errors and reads like a caricature of the real man. The new edition, *1774-1949* (Washington, D. C., 1950), contains material furnished by the author and to the best of his knowledge the statements are correct. Richard N. Current, *Old Thad Stevens* (Madison, Wis., 1942), facing p. 289, has a picture of Wilson and the other members of the

In contrast to the modern methods by which a nomination is secured in a direct primary or in a party convention (as of 1954, forty-three states use the former and five the latter), nominations were then regularly made in a party caucus. Furthermore, whereas a senator is now chosen in the general elections, at that time he was elected by the General Assembly, each house voting separately and their journals then being compared. This election as a rule followed shortly after the caucus. Both nomination and election usually took place early in the session of the Assembly; in the case of Iowa, this was in January. In a one-party state, such as Iowa happened to be by an overwhelming margin, nomination by the party caucus was equivalent to election. Therefore, the real contest was within the party, and this usually brought out the worst aspects of factional fighting. If it be true that there is no war so bitter as civil war, no quarrels so fierce as family quarrels, then by the same logic no politics is so bitter as factional politics. In their zeal to win, men would stop at nothing to do or say, regardless of the fact that such words might later boomerang on the party if proved to be true or on the maker of the statements if proved to be untrue.

The management of a senatorial campaign was something akin to the fine art of conducting a military campaign. There was a definite set of procedures that must be followed in proper and delicately timed sequence. First, each candidate must write letters feeling out the prominent local leaders of his party. In such letters the prospective candidate would not openly declare himself to be in the race but would ask for an expression of attitude toward himself if later he should decide to make the contest. One who received a satisfactory number of favorable replies or who was not otherwise discouraged would finally begin the active effort to have legislators favorable to himself elected in the October elections. This meant that the candidate and his manager would have to write hundreds of letters in their efforts to encompass the victory. A few key leaders had to be cultivated, from the precinct caucus up to the county conventions that would choose the party nominees for the legislative positions. After the October elections a furious fight would follow, until the January session began, each candidate trying to win and hold the votes of as many legislators as possible. What went on during this period was usually known only to God and the men directly involved.

Board of Managers for the House in the trial of President Andrew Johnson. This is a Matthew Brady photograph.

The most unfavorable feature of this business was that a powerful candidate for the Senate could fill the legislature with a large body of unfit or disinterested members who had been chosen and assisted more for their loyalty to their leader than for their qualities as lawmakers for the state. On coming into the session, the senatorial election was the first item of business; that disposed of, the legislators must stay on for the remainder of their terms, performing duties for which they might have neither fitness nor inclination.

Returning to the thread of the narrative in April, 1869, we find that the popular Iowa correspondent, "Linkensale," was writing that if the senatorial election were held then, the choice would be made from four possibilities: Allison, Judge E. H. Williams of Clayton County, George G. Wright, or James F. Wilson.<sup>48</sup> It seems to have been taken for granted, even this early, that Senator Grimes was not available for another term. Jacob Rich, who was closer to the scene and to the men than "Linkensale," sized the situation up as follows in a letter to Kirkwood:

I suppose [Governor Samuel] Merrill will be renominated without opposition. The Senatorial fight will be the most exciting, and just how it will turn out I do not pretend to be able to fathom. I shall be where I shall not be able to take any part in it. I think the North will be pretty well united for Allison, if he should be in the field. Are you not playing into the hands of Mr. Harlan and his friends and your enemies, in going for Wright? It looks a little that way to me at this time.<sup>49</sup>

Thus it seemed early in May to this acute observer. It is well to note that on this date, May 10, 1869, Rich (a member of the Grimes-Kirkwood-Wilson-Allison wing of the party) is clearly recognizing and indicating that James Harlan was the man who must be eventually beaten by that faction. About the same time a letter from Tichenor to Dodge pointed out that John A. Kasson was another enemy who must be undermined.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Cedar Falls *Gazette*, Apr. 23, 1869, reprint from *Chicago Post*.

<sup>49</sup> Jacob Rich to Kirkwood, May 10, 1869, *Kirkwood Correspondence*. It seems contradictory to learn that Kirkwood was not aligned with his protegee, Allison. Actually, it is in keeping with Kirkwood's sturdy independence; furthermore, he was obligated to Wright, who had supported him in 1865-1866. See Wright to Kirkwood, Apr. 16, 1865, No. 967, *ibid*. Samuel Merrill had been elected to succeed Stone as governor in 1867 and was renominated for a second term in 1869. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . ., 4:187-8.

<sup>50</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, May 13, 1869, Box 16, *Dodge Papers*.



But the real worry for Tichenor was the fear that Dodge had not picked the right man in settling upon Allison. He began to bombard Dodge with a series of letters in this vein.

. . . Wilson says he will not be a candidate for Senator. He must change his mind or you must run. I feel sure either of you can be elected, but we had all fixed on Wilson. I don't think it is in "the papers" to elect Allison and the result I fear will be that Judge Wright or some other inexperienced and unfit man will be selected. We can come nearer electing Palmer, I think, than Allison although I can and will stick every pin I can for Allison if you say so.<sup>51</sup>

Tichenor's doubts continued to mount rather than subside as the weeks went by. On July 14 he wrote Dodge a long letter expressing his fear of John A. Kasson. It was a masterpiece of denunciation in which Kasson was virtually accused of being a Copperhead. Tichenor was all for fighting him to the death even if in the process a Democrat slipped in as one of the Polk County representatives — this would be better than a victory for Kasson as United States Senator. Either through coincidence or through concerted planning, Frank W. Palmer, now Representative for the Fifth District in Congress, reported to Dodge on the very same day that Kasson was working hard, Judge Wright was overconfident, and Wilson should run and save them all from a Kasson victory.

Tichenor continued to blow hot and blow cold. In one and the same letter he expressed his desire to see Dodge succeed the late Secretary of War Rawlins in President Grant's cabinet, and thus save Grant, and yet he added: "I am dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs concerning the matter of U. S. Senator. *I tell you Wright is not the man.* Can't he be appointed to that U. S. Judgeship and you or Wilson or some *good* man take the Senatorship?"<sup>52</sup> This from the man who was supposed to be "sticking pins" for Allison; the date was September 28, just a few days before the legislative elections!

By contrast, Allison himself was very confident, almost overconfident. During the hubbub over the War Department vacancy, he wrote to Dodge, offering to go to Washington in his behalf if Dodge desired it. At the same

<sup>51</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, May 19, 1869, *Dodge Personal Biography*, IV, 1177, *Dodge Papers*. Frank W. Palmer, editor of the *Des Moines Register*, had been elected to Congress to succeed Dodge in 1868. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . ., 4:207.

<sup>52</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, Sept. 28, 1869, Box 16, *Dodge Papers*.



time he reported on his canvass as going well. Publicly, he managed to give an appearance of resignation to fate. A friendly newspaper put it this way:

We were permitted a few days since to read a letter addressed to one of our citizens by a gentleman holding somewhat intimate relations to Mr. Allison in which his position is stated in this wise. Mr. Allison would like the Senatorship, but if it does not come to him naturally and spontaneously he is not going to break up his plans of business or pleasure and spend his time in scheming for it. He is going to let things take their course without fretting about it, and to do substantially what we hoped he would do; discouraging any log-rolling, bargaining and like questionable practices in his behalf and so far as he is concerned, let the office seek the man rather than the man the office.<sup>53</sup>

The rising power among the editors of the state, young, able James S. ("Ret") Clarkson, was throwing his weight behind Judge Wright, with Governor Samuel Merrill as a possible compromise candidate. Inasmuch as Wright was well known as a Harlan man, and Harlan was on excellent terms with the Grant administration, it is easy to see that General Dodge had challenged a formidable man when he insisted on throwing Allison into the race against Wright. Judge George Grover Wright belonged to that class of pioneers that we might well call the "aristocrats of the frontier." He came from a prominent family in Indiana, where his brother had been a leading citizen, a former United States Senator, and a minister to Prussia. George Wright had finished his course of studies at Indiana University with high honors, and after a short residence at Rockville, near Senator Harlan's old home, he came out to Iowa and settled in the interior town of Keosauqua on the banks of the Des Moines River, then the center of land sales and a "lawyer's town." Here he made an enviable reputation at the bar, and by 1860 he had risen to the state supreme court. In the nine years since, he had established himself as a jurist and made his fame secure by the quality of his opinions.<sup>54</sup>

As the end of the year came on, only Allison believed in his own chances to win. Writing from Washington, where he was on duty in the House of Representatives, he gave Dodge his opinion about various items of business then before the House, especially the currency bill, and then took up the

<sup>53</sup> *Independence Bulletin*, quoted in *Cedar Falls Gazette*, Sept. 10, 1869.

<sup>54</sup> John E. Briggs, "George Grover Wright," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20: 551-2.

inevitable topic of the senatorial race. He was confident of victory "if we work hard." His hopes rested on the theory that Merrill would detach enough votes from Wright to keep Wright from winning on the first ballot and that would defeat Wright in the end. Allison's great confidence in the power of Dodge and Wilson to control the matter was plainly expressed.<sup>55</sup>

Tichenor came up in late December with new evidence of danger for Allison. His letter is typical of the thinking of the times and of Tichenor's own political philosophy and tactics.

I send you today the "Gazette" of the 18th in which you will find a long letter on the senatorial question in Merrill's behalf. Although it is dated "Keokuk" and signed "T.J.H." it was written at Mt. Pleasant by that little Jackass Geo. B. Corkill and was dictated by Harlan, Kasson & Merrill. Kasson has just got home from Washington where he & Walden arranged with Harlan a plan of campaign for Merrill and which Kasson thinks will, in addition to giving Merrill the long term, give him the short term — and I tell you their combination is a *strong* one. Harlan will use the Methodist Church and Merrill with Magoun and Grinnell to back him will use the Congregational Church, while Kasson will use the Episcopal Church and the Masonic fraternity.

Tichenor closed this letter by saying that he had planted newspaper articles that would give the effect of working up a sentiment for Dodge for the long term and Allison for the short term.<sup>56</sup>

The year and the campaign closed with a long letter from Allison to Dodge in which Allison reported to his field commander. This situation is paradoxical in that Allison, the nominal commander-in-chief, is actually the subordinate. The letter listed ten points on which Allison either reported his agreement with Dodge's views or gave assurance that he had carried out the instructions Dodge had given him. Therefore, in retrospect, it could hardly be said of Allison that he was letting the office seek the man.

The man who was really waiting for the office to come to him was Judge Wright. He did not extend himself even to the point of announcing a platform before the election. There is no point in making a great mystery of the victory of one of the ablest jurists in Iowa over a Congressman with only an average record and with the question mark of his railroad activities hanging over him. When the Republicans gathered on January 13 in the

<sup>55</sup> Allison to Dodge, Dec. 16, 1869, Box 16, *Dodge Papers*.

<sup>56</sup> Tichenor to Dodge, Dec. 19, 1869, *ibid*.

Hall of Representatives in the capitol building, Wright received 63 votes on the first ballot, Allison 39, and Merrill 24. Sixty-four votes were needed to secure the nomination. On the second try the votes were 66, 47, and 13 respectively, and Judge Wright was the victor.<sup>57</sup>

The learned and politically informed editor-correspondent of the Cedar Falls *Gazette* asserted that Allison had worked hard and that the Third District had proposed to win at all costs. Although he did not know the truth of the famous "Newell letter" charging Allison with buying votes, he did know positively that Allison had used "*every known means*" to manipulate the Assembly. The fight had been tremendous and there were "wild and uproarious performances when it was known that Judge Wright had won. . . . Allison is a badly used up man, and will never recover from the stunning blow."<sup>58</sup> The Newell letter to which he referred had been written by State Senator Homer V. Newell of Clayton County and published in the Davenport *Gazette* and the Dubuque *Herald* in early January. Newell had charged Allison with being supported by a subsidized press, the whiskey ring, the railroads, a \$40,000,000 lobby, federal appointees, and others.<sup>59</sup>

Almost an anti-climax was the vote for the short term, although it took three ballots to choose a candidate. The honor went to James B. Howell, editor of the Keokuk *Gate City*. Eleven men had been named for the post with Howell and J. B. Grinnell leading. Grinnell had made a good showing, but he did not have the strength to overcome Howell.<sup>60</sup>

Only the actions of the anti-Allison wing of the Dubuque Republicans require explanation. There is good reason to believe that Allison's own fellow-Dubuquers contributed largely to his defeat. This was the belief of Democratic editors in both Des Moines and Dubuque, and they could better afford to tell the truth than the Republican editors. More important, what they say is corroborated by letters to Allison. The Dubuque delegation to Des Moines for the legislative fight was far from unanimous in its preferences. Describing Allison's contingent as the Radical element of the city's Republicans, the hostile *Herald* wrote: "It is the Allison crew on the wing. They are going down to lobby for Allison as Senator, and whew how the whiskey will fly!" Among those listed were General M. M. Trumbull, re-

<sup>57</sup> Clark, *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa*, 149.

<sup>58</sup> Cedar Falls *Gazette*, Jan. 14, 21, 1870. Italics added.

<sup>59</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, Jan. 6, 1870.

<sup>60</sup> Clark, *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa*, 149.



cently appointed as successor to Colonel David B. Henderson as Collector of Internal Revenue; Willis Drummond, an inspector in the Revenue office; V. J. Williams, the postmaster; Colonel Henderson, now assistant United States district attorney; O. P. Shiras, Henderson's senior partner; George Crane, Allison's law partner; F. W. H. Sheffield, president of the Merchants National Bank of which Allison was a director and in which Allison's nephew, James Emerson Allison, worked as a bookkeeper; and John T. Hancock, vice-president of the same bank and a prominent merchant. The list is topped off with the vague expression, "and many others." Almost as an afterthought the article named three as also going to Des Moines: D. N. Cooley, S. P. Adams, and L. A. Thomas. These three might well have been given more attention; perhaps it was only the art of the writer who was thus casually drawing attention to the principal actors in the drama. For, as we have seen, these three men were the leaders of the anti-Allison faction in Dubuque. The writer also omitted the names of General E. C. David and Julius K. Graves, the latter temporarily estranged from the Allison wing of the party.<sup>61</sup>

The Democratic Des Moines *Statesman* gave the full explanation of the defeat. According to its reporter, Allison, a very confident man, "moves among the Savery [Hotel] lobbyists with graceful mien, and accepts the situation as his." But last night Cooley "came as Banquo's ghost," accompanied by Graves.

Everybody knows Graves. He trotted out Allison for Congress years ago, gave him money to buy the nomination, carried him on his shoulders into the representative's hall, made Allison's political history. Railroad complications [*sic*. Probably means "combinations"] made Allison rich and Graves tried to oust his protege and go to Washington in his stead. Alack! Allison counted noses among Graves' retainers and bought them up in a lump! So Graves is on the war path. So is Cooley. . . .

The reference was to Graves's defeat by Allison in the congressional convention of 1868. The Dubuque *Herald* editor added that Graves was now "avenged for West Union" (the site of the 1868 defeat), and the victory supper which Allison had ordered for three hundred was turned into a wake.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, Jan. 6, 1870.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1870.



There is undoubtedly a great deal of truth in this interpretation of Allison's defeat. Cooley's attitude toward Allison has already been noted. Graves was just the type of businessman who would try to buy votes as he bought and sold railroads or bank stock. Allison's *bete noire* in the case, however, was Dr. Lewis A. Thomas. He had been the chief accuser of Allison and Wilson in 1869 for what he termed their services to John I. Blair. This man wielded a barbed pen which was always well informed. A long letter, anonymous but nonetheless preserved by Allison, written by someone well placed in or around the legislature, later informed Allison of the tremendous influence in the lobby enjoyed by Dr. Thomas and the great effect of his letters to the Dubuque *Times* written under the pseudonym of "Jon." The anonymous writer attributed Allison's defeat to the effectiveness of Thomas' letters and his work around the legislature, saying that Allison had no idea how bitter the feeling had been in some quarters. Anonymous though the letter might be, it was clearly written by someone who had a vast knowledge of the inside manipulations of the legislature. The concluding point of the writer and his asserted reason for writing to Allison is a warning that if he wants to win in 1872, he must take steps to prevent this kind of opposition originating right in his home town.<sup>63</sup>

So had "Dodge & Co.'s" representative lost this round in his battle for power in Iowa politics. The result was not disastrous, however. Judge Wright carried much of his judicial impartiality into senatorial politics and soon counted himself out as a factor in future political maneuvers. The real test for Allison and all his friends would come in 1872 when Harlan's own seat would be up for contest, and then it would be determined if the mantle of Grimes would be passed on to Allison or if Harlan would continue to reign supreme.

<sup>63</sup> "A Friend" to Allison, Dec. 14, 1870, Box 219, *Allison Papers*. The letter was from Fort Dodge.

# THE POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR OF IOWA

By *Russell M. Ross\**

The official leader in state governmental affairs in Iowa has always been the governor. Even during the years that Iowa was a territory, the chief executive bore the title "Governor." Under the territorial constitution of 1838, however, the governorship was an appointive position, with the President of the United States naming the territorial executive. Complete executive power and authority under the territorial constitution rested with the governor, who held a three-year appointment, if not removed sooner by the President. The governor was charged with faithfully executing the laws of the territory.<sup>1</sup> His powers were very broad and inclusive, as he was not only the executive head but also exercised great influence over the legislative body, due to his semi-absolute veto power over all acts of the Assembly. Coupled with this extraordinary power was his appointive authority over all inferior judicial officers, justices of the peace, sheriffs, militia officers, and county surveyors. Thus, in summary, the first territorial governors possessed real power and prestige never equaled by any of the elected chief executives of the state.

Three men served as governors of Iowa Territory. First was Robert Lucas, appointed by the President in 1838. He served until 1841, when John Chambers was named to succeed him. The third, James Clark, served only one year, being appointed to his post in November of 1845 and terminating his services with the election of the first state governor of Iowa in 1846.<sup>2</sup> All three of Iowa's territorial governors were men of high caliber; all three had served in public office before assuming the executive post in Iowa; and none abused the powers and authority vested in them.

Second in authority in the executive office during the early days of government was the secretary of the Territory. Like the governor, he was

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<sup>1</sup> Dwight G. McCarty, *The Territorial Governors of the Old Northwest* (Iowa City, 1910).

<sup>2</sup> *Iowa Official Register, 1953-1954* (Des Moines, n. d.), 268.

appointed by the President for a term of years — in his case four years — subject to removal at any time by the President. As an administrative assistant the secretary performed the duties of the governor in the event of his death, resignation, or absence from the Territory. His regular duties included recording, preserving, and transmitting to the President the laws, acts, and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. No officer in the state government today has such all-inclusive duties. In some aspects the present lieutenant governor has many of the territorial secretary's administrative duties, but other of his functions are now performed by the secretary of state, the chief clerk of the House, or the secretary of the Senate.

The governor, under the first state constitution of 1846, was given "supreme executive" powers. The office was filled by popular election, with the only three qualifications being that the candidate must be a United States citizen, male, and at least thirty years of age. The elective term in the 1846 constitution was four years. However, the constitution neglected to provide for a lieutenant governor, and from 1846 to 1857 Iowa government functioned without such an officer. The present constitution, adopted in 1857, provides for both a governor and a lieutenant governor.

Following the time-honored American custom, three separate departments of government were formed — the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. The constitution stipulated that any person who is properly allowed one group of powers is prohibited from exercising any functions pertaining to either of the other branches, unless specifically permitted. The division and separation of powers is not distinct nor was it intended to be absolute.

The constitution of 1857 provides that the governor shall be elected at the same time and place as the members of the General Assembly, and that he shall hold his office for two years, the term beginning on the second Monday of January following the election. This was a reduction in the term of office, since the 1846 constitution gave the governor a four-year term. Many political scientists believe that the two-year term is too short. Governors in a majority of the forty-eight states are now elected to four-year terms. However, Iowa is one of the thirty-one states having no restrictions on the re-eligibility of the governor to succeed himself. The tendency in Iowa has been to re-elect the governor to his post once but to reject him if he seeks a third term. From the time Iowa was admitted to the Union, on December 28, 1846, to the present, thirty men have served as governors. Of these, only four have been elected three times (Kirkwood,

IOWA GOVERNORS 1846 TO DATE

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	County of Residence	Date of Inauguration	Age at Inauguration	Years Served	Politics	Death Date of
Ansel Briggs	1806	Vermont	Jackson	Dec. 3, 1846	40	1846-1850	Democrat	1881
Stephen Hempstead	1812	Connecticut	Dubuque	Dec. 4, 1850	38	1850-1854	Democrat	1883
James W. Grimes	1816	New Hampshire	Des Moines	Dec. 9, 1854	38	1854-1858	Whig-Rep.	1872
Ralph P. Lowe	1805	Ohio	Muscatine	Jan. 13, 1858	53	1858-1860	Republican	1883
Samuel J. Kirkwood	1813	Maryland	Johnson	Jan. 11, 1860	47	1860-1864	Republican	1894
William M. Stone	1827	New York	Marion	Jan. 14, 1864	37	1864-1868	Republican	1893
Samuel Merrill	1822	Maine	Clayton	Jan. 16, 1868	46	1868-1872	Republican	1899
Cyrus C. Carpenter	1829	Pennsylvania	Webster	Jan. 11, 1872	43	1872-1876	Republican	1898
Samuel J. Kirkwood	1813	Maryland	Johnson	Jan. 13, 1876	63	1876-1877	Republican	1894
Joshua G. Newbold	1830	Pennsylvania	Henry	Feb. 1, 1877	47	1877-1878	Republican	1903
John H. Gear	1825	New York	Des Moines	Jan. 17, 1878	53	1878-1882	Republican	1900
Buren R. Sherman	1836	New York	Benton	Jan. 12, 1882	46	1882-1886	Republican	1904
William Larrabee	1832	Connecticut	Fayette	Jan. 14, 1886	54	1886-1890	Republican	1912
Horace Boies	1827	New York	Black Hawk	Feb. 27, 1890	63	1890-1894	Democrat	1923
Frank D. Jackson	1834	New York	Polk	Jan. 11, 1894	40	1894-1896	Republican	1938
Francis M. Drake	1830	Illinois	Appanoose	Jan. 16, 1896	66	1896-1898	Republican	1903
Leslie M. Shaw	1848	Vermont	Crawford	Jan. 13, 1898	50	1898-1902	Republican	1932
Albert B. Cummins	1850	Pennsylvania	Polk	Jan. 16, 1902	52	1902-1908	Republican	1926
Warren Garst	1850	Ohio	Carroll	Nov. 24, 1908	58	1908-1909	Republican	1924
Beryl F. Carroll	1860	Iowa	Davis	Jan. 14, 1909	49	1909-1913	Republican	1939
George W. Clarke	1852	Indiana	Dallas	Jan. 16, 1913	61	1913-1917	Republican	1936
William L. Harding	1877	Iowa	Woodbury	Jan. 11, 1917	40	1917-1921	Republican	1934
N. E. Kendall	1868	Iowa	Monroe	Jan. 13, 1921	53	1921-1925	Republican	1936
John Hammill	1875	Wisconsin	Hancock	Jan. 15, 1925	50	1925-1931	Republican	1936
Daniel W. Turner	1877	Iowa	Adams	Jan. 15, 1931	54	1931-1933	Republican	
Clyde L. Herring	1879	Michigan	Polk	Jan. 12, 1933	54	1933-1937	Democrat	1945
Nelson G. Kraschel	1889	Illinois	Shelby	Jan. 14, 1937	48	1937-1939	Democrat	
George A. Wilson	1884	Iowa	Polk	Jan. 12, 1939	55	1939-1943	Republican	1953
B. B. Hickenlooper	1896	Iowa	Linn	Jan. 14, 1943	47	1943-1945	Republican	
Robert D. Blue	1898	Iowa	Wright	Jan. 11, 1945	47	1945-1949	Republican	
William S. Beardsley	1902	Iowa	Warren	Jan. 13, 1949	47	1949-	Republican	



Cummins, Hammill, and Beardsley). Fifteen others were re-elected to the office for a second term. Of the thirty governors, five were Democrats, twenty-four were Republicans, and one (James W. Grimes) was elected as a Whig, but left office as a member of the Republican party.

The constitutional requirements for the governorship are three in number. First, the candidate must be an American citizen. Second, he must have been a resident of Iowa for the two years next preceding the election. Third, he must be at least thirty years of age. The qualifications required by the constitution are not too meaningful. The youngest man to be elected governor was thirty-seven years old (William M. Stone); while the oldest (Francis M. Drake) was elected at the age of sixty-six.

The political parties require more practical tests of the candidates in their quest for suitable men.<sup>3</sup> The candidate must be on good terms with the element of the party that is exercising control at the time. He must be personally acceptable. His professional or business record must be of such a nature that it will attract voters. Governors of Iowa have come from various trades and vocations. The predominate profession is, of course, law, with twenty-one of Iowa's governors being lawyers. Surprisingly, for an agricultural state, only three list their occupation as farming, and only one was actually residing on a farm when elected. For the most part, Iowa's governors have been men of rather wide political experience. The majority, twenty of the thirty, had legislative experience before becoming chief executive of the state. Typical of the legislative experience of the governors is the career of the 30th governor, William S. Beardsley, first elected in 1948. Beardsley served in the Iowa Senate in the 45th, 46th, and 47th General Assemblies and in the Iowa House in the 52nd General Assembly. Many of the men who have won the gubernatorial office have used it as a political steppingstone to Washington. Nine of the governors have been elected to the United States Congress following their terms. Six became United States Senators (Grimes, Kirkwood, Cummins, Herring, Wilson, and Hickenlooper), two became Representatives (Carpenter and Kendall), while Gear served in both the House and the Senate. Two governors later became members of presidential cabinets — Kirkwood as Secretary of the Interior under Garfield; Shaw as Secretary of the Treasury under Theodore Roosevelt.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob A. Swisher, *Iowa Governors* (n. p., 1939), and "Early Iowa Governors," *The Palimpsest*, 16:1-30 (January, 1935).

The salary and expenses now allowed the governor of Iowa place him in the upper half of the governors in the United States. However, it has been only since July 1, 1947, that the Iowa governor has been receiving what may be classified as adequate compensation. Today his salary is \$12,000; before this time the annual salary was \$7,500, somewhat below the 1945 national average of \$8,000.

It was also in 1947 that the 52nd General Assembly appropriated funds for the purchase of a governor's mansion. Previous to the purchase of the \$40,000 home on Grand Avenue the chief executive of Iowa was forced to rent or purchase his own residence in Des Moines. The governor receives, besides his annual salary and executive mansion, official cars, a secretary with an annual salary of approximately \$5,000, and an expense account of approximately \$21,400 for "salaries, support, maintenance and miscellaneous purposes."

The governorship may become vacant in Iowa by at least five methods. These include, according to the state constitution, the governor's "death, impeachment, resignation, removal from office, or other disability." In case one of these five methods of removing the governor should occur, the lieutenant governor assumes the duties and prerogatives of the office. The succession of the gubernatorial post as provided in the constitution goes from the lieutenant governor to the president pro-tempore of the Senate to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The procedure followed in impeachment as outlined in the constitution of Iowa is copied after that of the national government. The House of Representatives has the sole power of impeachment, and the Iowa Senate acts as the jury. Guilt is found only when two-thirds of the senators present agree to conviction. It is assumed that the practice employed by the United States Senate of having the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court preside would be used in a state impeachment case. No governor of Iowa has ever been impeached. Two governors, Kirkwood and Cummins, have resigned to accept election to the United States Senate. Kirkwood's term was filled out by Newbold; Cummins', by Garst. It should also be noted that Iowa does not use removal by recall.

The staff and aides provided Iowa's chief executive are relatively few in number. Included in the governor's office are the following positions, besides the governor's executive or appointive secretary: a personal secretary, four assistant secretaries, a messenger, a clerk, and two typists. In

addition, each year there are several part-time assistants who receive hourly compensation.

The following are the governor's powers as listed in Iowa's 1857 constitution:

*Art. IV — Sec. 1* — The Supreme Executive power of this State shall be vested in a Chief Magistrate, who shall be styled the Governor of the State of Iowa. . . .

*Sec. 7* — The Governor shall be commander in chief of the militia, the army, and navy of this State.

*Sec. 8* — He shall transact all executive business with the officers of government, civil and military, and may require information in writing from the officers of the executive department upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices.

*Sec. 9* — He shall take care that the laws are faithfully executed.

*Sec. 10* — When any office shall, from any cause, become vacant, and no mode is provided by the Constitution and laws for filling such vacancy, the Governor shall have power to fill such vacancy, by granting a commission, which shall expire at the end of the next session of the General Assembly, or at the next election by the people.

*Sec. 11* — He may, on extraordinary occasions, convene the General Assembly by proclamation, and shall state to both Houses, when assembled, the purpose for which they shall have been convened.

*Sec. 12* — He shall communicate, by message, to the General Assembly, at every regular session, the condition of the State, and recommend such matters as he shall deem expedient.

*Sec. 13* — In case of disagreement between the two Houses with respect to the time of adjournment, the Governor shall have power to adjourn the General Assembly to such time as he may think proper; but no such adjournment shall be beyond the time fixed for the regular meeting of the next General Assembly. . . .

*Sec. 16* — The Governor shall have power to grant reprieves, commutations and pardons, after conviction, for all offenses except treason and cases of impeachment, subject to such regulations as may be provided by law. Upon conviction for treason, he shall have power to suspend the execution of the sentence until the case shall be reported to the General Assembly at its next meeting, when the General Assembly shall either grant a pardon, commute the sentence, direct the execution of the sentence, or grant a further reprieve. He shall have power to remit fines and

forfeitures, under such regulations as may be prescribed by law; and shall report to the General Assembly, at its next meeting, each case of reprieve, commutation or pardon granted, and the reason therefor; and also all persons in whose favor remission of fines and forfeitures shall have been made, and the several amounts remitted. . . .

Sec. 20 — There shall be a seal of this State, which shall be kept by the Governor, and used by him officially, and shall be called the Great Seal of the the State of Iowa.

Sec. 21 — All grants and commissions shall be in the name and by the authority of the people of the State of Iowa, sealed with the Great Seal of the State, signed by the Governor, and countersigned by the Secretary of State. . . .

Art. VII — Sec. 3 — All commissioned officers of the militia (staff officers excepted) shall be elected by the persons liable to perform military duty, and shall be commissioned by the Governor.

It would seem to be logical that the Iowa General Assembly would augment the supreme executive power of the governor to enable him to perform his constitutional duty of executing the laws. However, the Iowa legislature has been reluctant to give the governor extensive powers by state statute. Thus, the power and influence of the governor depends more on his official status and his position as state leader of his political party than it does on definite legislative grants of authority.

The most essential power to the effective exercise of administrative direction and control is that of appointment.<sup>4</sup> However, Iowa has traditionally followed the theory that democracy implies popular election of state officials. Therefore, the secretary of state, the attorney general, the secretary of agriculture, the state auditor, the state treasurer, and members of the commerce commission are elected by the people. Until 1952 the office of superintendent of public instruction was elective, but at the 1953 session of the General Assembly this office was made appointive.

Thus, the governor's appointive power is sharply curtailed, but there are still numerous relatively minor administrative posts that he can fill. The governor's appointive power, however, is not complete in the state printing board, board of law examiners, state board of health, State Fair board, and the geological board, since many state officers serve in part as *ex officio*

<sup>4</sup> Carl H. Erbe, "The Executive Department of Government as Provided by the Constitution of Iowa," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 23:363-405 (July, 1925).



members of these boards. In all, there are approximately twenty state agencies of varying importance that are constituted wholly or partially by election. Many of these state boards and commissions in numerous other states are filled by the governor.

The governor of Iowa does have the exclusive right to appoint, without any restrictions, the following officials and boards:

Adjutant General	Board of Medical Examiners
State Comptroller	Board of Embalmers Examiners
Notaries Public	Board of Cosmetology Examiners
Board of Engineering Examiners	State Board of Accountancy
Board of Architectural Examiners	Board of Examiners in the Basic Sciences
Curators of the State Historical Society (9 of the 18 members)	Iowa Development Commission
State Board of Health (5 members)	Pharmacy Examiners
Commission for the Blind (2 of 3 members)	Commission on Uniform State Laws
Board of Podiatry	Watchmakers' Board
Board of Osteopathic Examiners	Building Code Council
Board of Chiropractic Examiners	Merit System Council
Board of Nurse Examiners	Board of Dental Examiners
Board of Barber Examiners	Board of Optometry Examiners

The governor also makes the following appointments, but they must be confirmed by two-thirds of the Senate:

Board of Parole	Industrial Commissioner
State Tax Commission	Insurance Commissioner
State Highway Commission	Superintendent of Banking
State Board of Education	Iowa Employment Security Commission
Commissioner of Public Health	Iowa Liquor Commission
Board of Control of State Institutions	Commissioner of Public Safety
The Conservation Commission	
Labor Commissioner	

The act making the office of superintendent of public instruction appointive also provided for a new board of public instruction with nine members. Eight of the members are to be elected by the boards of education of the eight congressional districts; the ninth member is to be appointed by the governor.

In general, it is asserted that the governor is free to appoint without restriction any one he chooses for members of the minor administrative boards. The most important officer in this group is the comptroller, who

should of course be responsible to the governor, but who, in his auditing capacity, should be accountable to the state legislature. In contrast, the agencies that must have senatorial approval are powerful agencies with each assigned an important field of administration and vested with important responsibilities. Combined with the elective officials, these governor-appointed officers form the bulwark of Iowa's administrative organization. Therefore, it is not entirely fair to hold the governor solely responsible for the activities of many of the most important officials whom he has only a share in appointing. The approval by the Senate of appointees is primarily a hold-over from the national system of checks and balances. There are strong arguments for both senatorial approval and for relieving the Senate of this responsibility. The weight of authority and experience indicates that little is to be gained by having the Senate approve of the governor's appointments. In Iowa there apparently is no reason for some officials' appointments being subject to senatorial scrutiny while others are not. The Iowa governor has relatively little power over local officials of the state. He has no appointive or removal power over county or city officers other than those already mentioned.

The power of removal of the governor in Iowa is more limited than his appointive powers.<sup>5</sup> The elective and constitutional state officers are removable only by impeachment. The procedure that the governor must use to remove the other officers is cumbersome. He may order the attorney general to file with the appropriate court for causes specified in the law a petition for removal of any appointive officer. The court, upon hearing the charges, then removes the accused official if it deems the charge sufficient. There are a relatively small number of state officials over whom the governor has greater powers in regard to their removal. For illustration, the governor may remove at any time a member of the board of architectural examiners. However, most of the administrative officials serve fixed terms, which range from two to six years, and removal is only by court procedure. Many of these commissions and boards have staggered terms, and only a minority may ever come up for appointment by any one governor.

The immediate administration of the state militia is charged to the adjutant general, who is appointed by the governor. Under the constitution, the governor is the commander in chief of the armed forces of the state.

<sup>5</sup> O. K. Patton, "Removal of Public Officials in Iowa," *Iowa Applied History Series* (6 vols., Iowa City, 1912-1930), 2:389-440.

In emergencies he may order out the militia, but this action is usually expensive and is resorted to only after all other measures have failed.

One of the powers that the governor of Iowa can exert over legislation passed by the General Assembly is through the exercise of his right of veto. Iowa's constitution allows the governor only a limited veto. If the legislature remains in session, the governor is given three days, Sundays excepted, in which to determine whether to sign or veto a bill that has been sent to him by the Iowa General Assembly. Should he decide to veto the bill he returns it to the originating house with his reasons for vetoing. It may become a law over his veto if passed by a two-thirds majority of both houses. If the governor does not take any action within the three days following presentation of a bill to him, it becomes a law just as if he had signed it. Any bill that the legislature submits to the governor during the last three days of the legislative session must be deposited by the governor in the secretary of state's office within thirty days after the end of the session with either his signature or with his reasons for a veto. While the Iowa veto is correctly termed limited, the governor's veto has never been overridden by a two-thirds vote of both houses of the General Assembly in the history of the state. Iowa's governors have not abused their veto power,<sup>6</sup> as evidenced by the fact that no bills have become law, once they were vetoed. However, there has been no movement to grant the Iowa chief executive the item veto that is used in all but 8 of the 48 states.

The governor is empowered to call extraordinary sessions of the General Assembly if he desires to do so. In only twelve instances have governors believed it necessary to convene the legislature in special session. Several governors have resorted to polling the legislators to determine whether or not they believed a special session desirable, and have been guided by the answers of the lawmakers in calling or not calling the session. Once the governor orders the Assembly to convene, he usually addresses them, outlining the problems he believes they should consider. From that point on the legislators can do whatever they like, as there is no limitation on the subjects that they can legislate upon in an extraordinary session.

The governor outlines for the General Assembly at the time of his inauguration his policies of administration and emphasizes the problems he believes must be solved. From time to time the governor transmits special

<sup>6</sup> Jacob A. Swisher, "The Executive Veto in Iowa," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 15:155-213 (April, 1917).



messages to the assembly, the most important of which is the budget message. These messages exert marked influence upon legislation, with the budget message forming the background and basis for most of the appropriation measures that are enacted by the Iowa General Assembly. Another power or influence over legislation and the legislators in the hands of the governor is his authority to proclaim special elections.

The real measure of the governor's control over legislative action lies not so much in his constitutional powers as in his personality and influence as the leader of a political party. The governor, if he is to guide the legislature, must be a man of purposeful character with positive force. Through his personality and political affiliations a strong governor may often determine which bills will become statute law and which will be lost.

In analyzing the Iowa gubernatorial post, it must be concluded that Iowa has placed her governors in the almost impossible position of being by law responsible for the over-all administration of the state yet not having sufficient power and authority to control the hierarchy completely. Often governmental units grant power without responsibility, but here is presented a situation of responsibility without commensurate power.

One of the first changes that might well be considered, if a truly integrated administrative organization is to be accomplished, would be to eliminate the popular election of the secretary of state, secretary of agriculture, state treasurer, state auditor, and attorney general, and to make these positions appointive. All of these officials, except the state auditor, should be responsible to and cooperate completely with the governor. If a strong, centrally controlled, efficient state administration is to be maintained, the governor should be able to control these administrative officers, and control can best be attained by giving him the power to appoint. These changes, except in the case of the secretary of agriculture, would require an amendment to the state constitution, or could be included in a revision of the constitution, when and if that should ever occur.

The appointive power that the governor now possesses in Iowa should be strengthened. Membership on too many important state boards and commissions is an *ex officio* duty of administrators who should be devoting full time to their primary job and not be expected to drain off their energies and attention to secondary obligations on boards and commissions. Likewise, some authorities question the soundness of the device used widely in Iowa of requiring the governor to appoint two members of a five-man board from



the minority party. The tendency would too often seem to be to appoint relatively "weak" members of the opposition party to board and commission posts, and to replace the minority members with others as frequently as possible, so that no minority party member could build up experience on a board or commission. Likewise, the value of senatorial approval of almost all appointments is subject to considerable question in the minds of many administrators.

Iowa might well give attention to granting the governor more influence over the legislature and making him a more effective legislative leader. Allowing the governor to have an item veto would make him a more positive force in his budgetary relationships with the General Assembly. Iowa has never given the governor this power, but it might improve his position. His staff is likewise inadequate. He should have a staff with several administrative assistants and aides. His present office force is a mere skeleton as compared with the staffs provided most of the state governors. The executive council might become a useful cabinet for the governor, if its members were all directly responsible and accountable to him rather than being completely independent as they are at the present time.

In direct contrast to the powers of the President of the United States, the authority of the governor in a majority of the forty-eight states is just as narrowly restricted as it is in Iowa. Fear of vesting power in the executive can be traced back to the days of colonial government, when the governors of the colonies were appointed by the king. Thus, when the first states wrote their constitutions, the executive department was deliberately made weak. As new states were formed, they tended to copy the constitutions of the older states. A movement for concentrating power and authority as well as responsibility in the hands of the governor is slowly gaining support, however, in spite of bitter opposition. Many persons contend that it is "Un-American" to vest too much power in the hands of a governor. New York and California are two of the states that have completely reorganized their state administrative machinery and have placed power commensurate with responsibility in their executive officer. Iowa has as yet resisted any movement to centralize the control over the administration in one individual, preferring to stay with the time-honored custom of electing administrative officers, who form what is called an "executive council," but do not perform as do the presidential cabinets on the national scene, even though in outward appearance the members may resemble those of the federal cabinet.

## SOURCE MATERIAL OF IOWA HISTORY

[Among the most interesting, and certainly the most lively, of the "Washington Letters" published in the Des Moines *Iowa State Register* during the years of the Civil War are those signed "Linkensale." As everyone in Iowa knew, "Linkensale" was the pseudonym of L. D. Ingersoll, who was variously a newspaperman in Knoxville, Iowa City, and Muscatine, and who, during the war, was working in a government bureau in Washington. Not hampered by modern standards of objectivity, "Link" did not hesitate to give his own opinions of men and events in language both more colorful and more frank than that in general use in the twentieth century. His reporting also contrasts with that of "Miriam," another *Register* correspondent [See JOURNAL for January, 1954], whose formal language carried the full flavor of the Victorian era. "Link's" discussions of the Washington political scene in 1864 are here reproduced as an example of political reporting ninety years ago. — EDITOR.]

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### AN IOWA POLITICAL REPORTER, 1864

[January 12, 1864]

You have such an excellent corps of regular correspondents here that it may seem presumptuous in me to send you a communication. If you do not like it, have one of your messengers sell it to the rag man, wherewithal to treat a Copperhead member of the Legislature to a glass of lager or a ticket to the sterioptocomoromatum, I believe they call the show where you can see dead rebels as large as life, and twice as natural.

The cold weather having set in, our two great armies having gone into winter quarters, poor Little Mac, having already been trotted out by the excellent old ladies who took their tea up at Philadelphia, the other day, Uncle Abe having got over the small pox far enough to tell stories as well as ever, and the White House being thoroughly washed, smoked, fumigated, aired and cleaned up all around, it is a first-rate time for the President-makers. Let me give you a few notes pertaining to that subject, upon the express understanding, however, that I merely report and do not argue, nor express any views or preferences of my own.

At this present writing, five eminent gentlemen of the Union party have adherents enough to make considerable talk. These are: Mr. Lincoln, Mr. [Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Portland] Chase, Gens. [Benjamin F.] Butler, [John C.] Fremont, and [Nathaniel] Banks.

It is universally conceded that Mr. Lincoln has now the inside track, and is far ahead. Mr. Secretary [of State, William H.] Seward, Secretary [of the Interior, John P.] Usher, Attorney General [Edward] Bates, Postmaster [Montgomery] Blair, in the Cabinet; such Senators as [Ira] Harris and [Edwin D.] Morgan, of New York; [Edgar] Cowan of Pennsylvania; [John B.] Henderson of Missouri; [John] Sherman of Ohio; [Henry S.] Lane of Indiana; such Representatives as [Isaac N.] Arnold [of Illinois], [Reuben E.] Fenton [of New York], the Pennsylvania and New York men generally, urge Mr. Lincoln's re-nomination with less or more earnestness, according to the character of the individuals. Mr. Arnold opened the ball in Congress, a few days ago, by reading a speech (he cannot make a speech properly, so-called, to save his life), radical enough on the subject of slavery, and highly eulogistic of the President. Mr. Lincoln might have had a stronger advocate to open up his case, but I reckon the polished gentleman from Chicago couldn't hold in his essay any longer. The very next morning the news came booming down from New Hampshire that the old Granite State was going solid for Lincoln, and the telegrams quite eclipsed the oratory. New Hampshire did more in a minute than the Chicago Senator will accomplish during the session. However that may be, it is certain that the adherents of the President, in Congress and out of Congress, at the "political metropolis" of the country and throughout the rural districts, are hard at work for their chief. They feel strong and are unanimous. They do not abuse those who do not look through their spectacles.

Mr. Chase has a host of friends among the moneyed men of the country. It is admitted by most persons that his services have really been of incalculable benefit to the Union cause — more so, say many, than the services of even our most fortunate general. Where would we have been, to-day, if our finances had been swamped as they were in the war of the Revolution, or as the finances of the Confederacy are now swamped? One dollar of our green-back currency will buy twenty dollars of Confederate money in the rebel capital. It is a strong point, strongly urged by Mr. Chase's friends. They are not confined to the "monetary circles." Such men as [Charles] Sumner [of Massachusetts], [William] Sprague [of Rhode Island, Chase's



son-in-law] and [Samuel C.] Pomeroy [of Kansas] in the Senate, [Elbridge G.] Spaulding [of New York], [George W.] Julian [of Indiana] and [James M.] Ashley [of Ohio] in the House, are his adherents; while in the country thousands of earnest men who knew him of old, and have long admired his ability and his firm devotion to the cause of Freedom, stand by him like a band of brothers. Horace Greeley is understood to be among the number, and they know very little of his influence and his sagacity, who estimate lightly either the one or the other. I might enumerate other men of note, chiefly among those connected with the press, who are warmly for Mr. Chase. In so far as I know the operations of these men, they are not so blindly devoted to the interests of their chief as to wish his success without perfect harmony. Nor do they say anything to the Secretary upon the subject, for the reason that his position in the Cabinet forbids any active exertions on his part against the President.

Gen. Butler has many friends all over the country, and I am convinced there will be a concerted movement, not a little formidable, in his behalf. Old Ben Wade [Senator from Ohio] swears by him, as do a great many who have never believed in rosewater warfare.

In a matter-of-fact letter like this, it would be useless to deny that John C. Fremont has adherents who, if not numerous, are zealous — some of them distinguished men.

I do not pretend to account for it, but for some reason or other, the "conservative chaps" make considerable noise and confusion in behalf of Gen. Banks. The old-line Whigs who used to take their toddy regularly and, as regularly but not as often, vote the Democratic ticket, are for Banks to a man, so far as my acquaintance among that class of people goes, which, indeed, is not very far. Better men than these are for him too; but not many. Fremont and Banks, except so far as combinations are concerned, are practically out of the ring. As the little negro boys put up the pins for us glorious Caucasian fellows to knock down, so do the friends of these gentlemen put their names on the slates for the friends of the stronger parties to wipe out. They will do well enough for "combination" purposes.

Your intelligent readers are familiar with the arguments used in behalf of Mr. Lincoln — his integrity, his popularity with the people, both those at home and the soldiers in the field, his good common sense, the success, in general, of his administration. Mr. Seward, indeed, argues that the present Executive, having been prevented by the rebellion from being President of



the whole country, has next thing to a divine right to the succession — an argument, however, which is more damaging than beneficial to Mr. Lincoln (perhaps for that very reason used by its inventor), and is not argued by his real friends. These arguments I need not elaborate. Admitted to be powerful, you will hear them here in all their varied forms, at the places of public resort — hotels, restaurants, everywhere.

So much for the *pro*; now for the *con*. The Fremont men are personal in their tactics. They denounce the President for his persistent snubbing of the Pathfinder — say that his removal from command in Missouri, the placing over him of his personal enemy, [Gen. John] Pope, the keeping him down ever since, is but a heartless plan adopted by [former Secretary of War Simon] Cameron and carried out by the Executive, to crush one of our best and truest men, one who saw clearly the full nature of this terrible contest and adopted the best measures to settle it long before light glimmered in upon the eyes of the Administration. Outside of this personal matter, they affirm that Fremont's Proclamation [Fremont, without authority, freed the Missouri slaves in 1861 when he was in command in that district; this action resulted in his removal from that command by Lincoln] was heartily and warmly sustained by the loyal people everywhere outside of Kentucky, that even the New York *Herald* threw up its hat and shouted over the intelligence of it, and that it was Mr. Lincoln who split the people in the middle by his recall of that proclamation.

The zealous champions of Mr. Chase, the zealous champions of Gen. Butler, without being positively atrabilarious, harp upon the failures of the Administration, and think their harp is one of a thousand strings. The gloomy early days are not forgotten. They refuse to be comforted because of that unhappy period when the rosewater policy, the diluted rosewater policy, "reigned in Warsaw"; when the country was thereby forced to pass through the valley of the shadow of humiliation; to submit, through all those harrowing months, to the policy which was "conceived in sin, and born in Kentucky"; to submit to the venerable imbecility of [General Winfield] Scott, the pompous incapacity of [General Irvin] McDowell, the slaughter-pens of [General George B.] McClellan, the sublime orders and bathotic performances of Pope, the failures of [General Don Carlos] Buell, the outrages of the Gamble-Schofield dynasty, the unutterable villainies of [General Henry W.] Halleck, the pusillanimities of the State Department. All this, and more, you will hear in the street cars, from little gatherings of

men on the sunny side of the avenue, at the "headquarters" of the different candidates.

Those, therefore, who think that Mr. Lincoln is going to be renominated without a struggle, are greatly mistaken. There may, indeed, be no severe struggle in the Nominating Convention. I hope there will not, and believe there will not be. I believe that if Mr. Lincoln is to be nominated, it will be by acclamation. But I know a vast deal of work is now being done for other men as well as for Mr. Lincoln. If it shall turn out that the President can count more noses than the others, they will leave the course to him. Meantime, the fight will go bravely on till that shall be determined. As for Gen. Grant, it will suffice to say that he is not and will not be a candidate, and that his glorious army is well nigh unanimous for Lincoln. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Jan. 20, 1864]

[April 6, 1864]

The failure of Seward to manage our foreign affairs has long been patent to everybody except the Albany regency and its hangers-on. Perhaps there is no failure of his more lamentable than that of his diplomacy touching Mexican affairs. It should seem that he must have been as fearful of Napoleon III as the diplomats and public men generally of Europe used to be fearful of the original Buonaparte. It can hardly be doubted that he has been having perturbed visions of American Magentas and Solferinos, just as the European cabinets used to have perturbed visions of Marengos and Austerlitzes. On no other hypothesis but that of cowardice, can the failure, the fall of William H. Seward be accounted for, unless, indeed, we accept the melancholy one of a softening of the brain. In either case the contemplation is a sad one.

"Imperial Caesar, dead, and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole, to keep the wind away."

But not even to that useful purpose can you put the premier who lives in the body, but is dead as a mackerel or a last year's gallinipper, in the respect and affections of his countrymen.

The following resolution introduced in the House of Representatives day before yesterday, and passed without an opposing vote, may be regarded as something more than a hint to the Secretary of State, and important in other respects:

"Resolved, By the Senate and House of Representatives of the United

States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress of the United States are unwilling, by silence, to leave the nations of the world under the impression that they are indifferent spectators of the deplorable events now transpiring in the Republic of Mexico; therefore, they think it fit to declare that it does not accord with the sentiments of the people of the United States to acknowledge a monarchical government erected over the ruins of any Republican government in Mexico, under the auspices of any European Power."

This is, substantially, a re-affirmance of the Monroe Doctrine, which those journals especially friendly to the State Department have been insidiously attempting to fritter away for the past two years. . . . I look upon the passage by the House of Mr. Davis' resolution as an important movement in the right direction — bringing us back to the hereditary doctrine of the Government.

It is also important in another respect, which is, indeed, rather political in the party sense, than national. Many of those earnest Radicals who oppose the renomination of Mr. Lincoln have urged as one objection to his administration its abandonment of the Monroe Doctrine. Perhaps the passage of this resolution by Congress, and its approval by the President, will remove that objection, as it certainly ought to remove it, so far as Uncle Abe himself is concerned. It might do some good to Seward, too, only that formerly astute statesman has got, like the boy in the spelling book, "past redemption."

The only other new phase in the Presidential question is the discussion of the postponement of the Baltimore Convention, the postponement being advocated in the main by those opposed to the renomination of Mr. Lincoln, and objected to by those who favor him. I do not think there will be a postponement. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Apr. 13, 1864]

[April 11, 1864]

You must understand, Mr. Editor, that the rather voluminous correspondence which I have the good nature to inflict upon my friends in Iowa is all, or nearly all, composed before breakfast in the morning. I should postpone this epistle until to-morrow morning, with the view of giving you notes of the spicy debate in Congress anticipated for to-day, which was inaugurated on Saturday, but that I might thereby miss being properly set

forth in the very large weekly edition of the *Register* till my lucubrations should become somewhat stale and unprofitable.

On Friday last, Mr. Alexander Long, who misrepresents one of the Hamilton county, Ohio, Districts in Congress, saw fit to unburden his mind of a studied, long deliberated, committed-to-memory speech, which was as full of treason as an egg is of meat. It would have been applauded to the echo had it been delivered in Richmond before that "banditti of man stealers calling themselves the Confederate Government," to whom, indeed, it will render aid, comfort and encouragement, as it will to Mason and Slidell abroad, and the enemies everywhere of freedom and Union. Vallandigham, were he a member of Congress, would scarcely have dared to utter more treasonable, more atrocious sentiments than those uttered, with such deliberate baseness by this man Long on Friday. — He openly avowed himself a disunionist, opposed to giving a man or a dollar to the prosecution of the war, in favor of at once recognizing the Southern Confederacy. In his manner he was haughty and overbearing, so offensive to good breeding and good taste as his sentiments were to patriotism. He shook his auburn locks, or rather ringlets, (for Long, maugre his villainous eyes, is not a bad looking man, reminding me not a little of our old virtuous and honest citizen, Dr. James D. Eads,) as though he were Jupiter Tonans, and all the crowd around about him very "one-horse" gods and goddesses indeed. It made one's blood boil to hear him, and almost gnash one's teeth to see him. I think Washington could not have been more indignant upon learning of Benedict Arnold's raid into Virginia. . . .

The next day, Mr. Speaker Colfax, left his desk and offered a resolution expelling the Ohio traitor. He sustained his resolution in a short, pointed speech, remarkable, as all his speeches are remarkable, for its kindness of tone. Herein, in fact, is the shabby part of Speaker Colfax's character. He is not a good hater, and, affirmatively, is a good deal too mild a mannered man for a leader in these troubled times. To him, Mr. Cox, of Ohio, responded, and, apparently disavowing the treasonable sentiments of his colleague, nevertheless actually sustained him by argument as he did afterwards indirectly by his vote against the expulsion of Harris, whose treasonable utterances he had just heard. I am candid enough to admit, however, that the little Ohio dodger, voted to censure Harris. If that be not water gruel treatment for traitors and diluted water-gruel treatment at that, I do not know what is.



After Cox got through, there was a debate of some four hours, in which, beside Cox himself, who was the principal manager on the side of the Opposition, Julian, Kelley, Dawson, Miller of Pennsylvania, Garfield, Washburne, Harris, J. C. Allen and Fernando Wood, were the participants. Julian did not speak long, but he let fall a few fiery expressions such as only he can use with fine effect, to which Cox retorted with his usual wiry adroitness. Then Kelley of Pennsylvania "sailed in," and spoke for some thirty minutes in his magnificent manner, dealing terrific blows upon his adversaries in this exciting *melee*, like Richard of the Lion Heart within the memorable lists of Ashby. Dawson, Miller and Allen then went around the arena a while, when Garfield rushed in and drove them ignominiously from the field.

Then to drop all these classical, chivalric and warlike figures, Mr. Harris of Maryland got the floor, and delivered himself of even a more treasonable and atrocious speech than that of Long. It had this to say in its favor, however, as compared with the effort of his fellow-rebel from Ohio, that it was evidently unpremeditated. The treason of Mr. Harris flows naturally from the heart without preliminary tapping. He talks treason as naturally as Falstaff talked lies, or as Rev. Joel T. Headley writes fustian, or as Garret Davis talks intolerable and interminable nonsense, or, in short, "anything of that sort." He said, in an excited manner, and with clenched fists beating the air, as well as his glass of water, that our arms had not prevailed against the South, and he prayed God they might not! Well might Kelley say that had our soldiers heard him, they would have brained him where he stood.

After this, the noise and confusion became uproarious, but at last Colfax so far caved in on his resolution as to ask a postponement of its consideration till to-day at two o'clock, when Washburne moved the expulsion of Harris, which carried by a vote of 81 yeas to 58 nays, but was lost for the want of the requisite two-thirds vote. Schenck then offered a resolution declaring Harris to be an unworthy member of the House, and severely censuring him, which was carried — yeas 92, nays 18. And thus the debate on Saturday ended. . . .

Several Democrats voted for Mr. Schenck's resolution, but they all voted against expulsion. Thus have they put themselves on the record as announcing their idea of a "vigorous prosecution of the war" — that traitors should be severely censured! . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, April 20, 1864]

[April 18, 1864]

The debate on the resolution to expel Long from the House of Representatives closed on Thursday, winding up by the courtesy of Mr. Colfax, with a speech from Mr. Long himself, which speech, for the first half of it, was quite penitent and respectable, but then got to be bad enough. I don't think Alexander H. Long could manage to get through with more than thirty minutes of his precious life without falling from grace.

This debate, the first day's portion of which I gave you an account in my last, was admirably conducted on the part of the Republicans. Gen. Schenck, Henry Winter Davis and Mr. Colfax made remarkably fine speeches, whilst all the debaters on that side of the House did themselves no little credit. Mr. Grinnell of our State being among those who added to their reputation and importance in the House. Schenck's speech was what you might call a "regular squelcher." So to day, he skinned Fernando Wood alive, and hung his hide out on the wall to dry. — Every square inch in the galleries was occupied even to the niches for the statuary, and great numbers crowded about the doors, blockading the corridors. Daniel Webster did not have half so large an audience when he made his famous reply to Hayne. The General had everything to inspire him, and made the most of his fine advantages. His speech was a tremendous philippic, crowded full of admirable points, and bursts of indignant invective. "It brought down the house" several times, in spite of all the Speaker could do to prevent it. Henry Winter Davis, in my judgment, made the best speech of the occasion. He is a fine orator, as fine, I think as we have in the country. His very manner is fascinating, while his argumentation is always forcible, and his eloquence irresistible. On this occasion he used no notes whatever, but "spoke right on" for an hour in as admirable a strain as can well be imagined. Mr. Colfax outdid himself when closing the debate on that side. He has never made so strong a speech, and if his imperturbable good nature might have seemed to be a fault at such a time, I do not think he could help it.

A few general words about the discussion on the other side: . . . Mr. Fernando Wood, who is by no means a "little villain" "prayed God" excessively; Mr. Voorhees, who is not commonly understood to be precisely virtuous, "thanked God" at the end of every other sentence, and at the commencement of the rest; whilst Mr. Rogers of New Jersey, who doesn't know how to pronounce the commonest English words, and is owned by the Cam-

den and Amboy besides, "trusted in God" with a faith for which piling Pelion on Ossa would have been merely a recreation. I never saw so pious a set of moral traitors in my life. Here are these men who, so far as words may do so, are rendering aid and comfort to the enemy; are doing all in their power to screen from just punishment the man who defends the most wicked of rebellions; whose private lives are not such as we would commend to the imitation of our children, to say the least of them, who get off more religious expletives than one would hear at a week's "protracted meeting." — The gentlemen I have named, with Cox and Pendleton, made the loudest speeches on the Copperhead side, save only that of Harris. The New Jersey man is, I think, the nearest to a fool of any man out of a straight jacket I ever saw, in or out of Congress. With the exception of his speech, the efforts of the Democrats were not without merit, and one or two were quite ingenious, but it is admitted on all hands that we gained a complete victory. Our friends are jubilant. The friends of Jeff. Davis are sadly down in the mouth. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Apr. 27, 1864]

[May 23, 1864]

The time for the Cleveland and Baltimore Conventions is so near at hand that their probable action must needs excite the attention of politicians everywhere, and especially here where the whole community is stirred by the least political movement like aspen leaves by the breeze. As to the Cleveland convention, it is simply a radical anti-Lincoln movement, and may embarrass more or less the action of the Baltimore Convention. — There is the name of but one distinguished American gentleman upon the call — that of B. Gratz Brown, of Missouri. The others are nearly all Germans.

The Germans in America are for the most part earnestly devoted to the cause of freedom and humanity. They are generally industrious, frugal, intelligent. . . . What I object to in the Germans here is, that they seem to want to Germanize America, refusing themselves to be Americanized, except through the technical forms of the naturalization papers. They held a professedly German convention at Cleveland last year. In a hundred ways they preserve their distinct nationality, and in the instance cited, exhibited it in an offensive manner.

The coming Cleveland Convention will not be wholly German, but it will



be so nearly so that the difference will not be worth calculation. It will, probably, adjourn to Baltimore, meeting there at the same time as the Union Convention. Its managers have already secured the hall of the Maryland Institute, the finest and largest in the city, compelling our Convention to go to a theatre. I suspect there will be a little awkward embarrassment at first, but I cannot see any ground upon which to anticipate serious trouble. Certainly the friends of Mr. Lincoln can afford to be generous, and his opponents cannot afford to be unreasonable. A radical platform, and the certainty of a radical Cabinet, demanded no less by a great majority of the American people than by our German citizens, ought to satisfy all, and less ought not to be thought of by the friends of Mr. Lincoln. That is the right way to settle the hash, and according to present indications, that is the way it will be settled. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, June 1, 1864]

[June 6, 1864 — Baltimore]

There is skirmishing all along the political lines this forenoon. The town has been full of President-makers for several days. One sees them everywhere — on the innumerable verandahs of Barnum's Hotel, on the long verandah of this fine House [Eutaw House], crowding all the places of public resort, jamming up Baltimore and Calvert streets, and in crowds on Monumental Square, in front of Gen. Lew Wallace's headquarters. It is a lively time, nearly as much so as that liveliest of all times I ever experienced — the week of the Chicago Convention.

There is this difference, however. At Chicago, there were very few Members of Congress, whilst there are many of them here now. A majority of these are opposed to Mr. Lincoln, or, to state the fact more exactly, are opposed to that kite with the Blair family for the tail. The kite, they think, would fly well enough with a new tail. — And that is what causes almost all of the preliminary skirmishing, which has thus far been developed. That and the platform make up the sum total of discussion.

As to the coming meeting at Maryland Institute, it does not, as yet, frighten any body from his propriety. It will no doubt have among members many earnest, patriotic men, but if it was designed to dictate terms for, or split the Union party in two, it will signally fail, according to present indications, both in the one and the other. I have no little respect for political spleen, and considerable affection for lager beer; but "rule or ruin" is



an article of secession faith to which I do not subscribe. Nor will any considerable portion of the people. That is what the Maryland Institute folks are having put through their wool this morning.

The Iowa delegation, thanks to the foresight of Hub Hoxie, have tip-top accommodations at this hotel, one of the best in the country. They are all in good spirits this evening, and agree that a radical platform and Mr. Lincoln is the programme that the Convention ought to adopt. That it is the programme which, it is thought, will win. — Other delegations think the same way. I guess they are right who think so.

Mr. Greeley makes no assaults on the President, I learn, though I have not seen him. — Thurlow Weed is lying low and pulling wires — a useless labor. Mr. Lincoln is stronger without his help than with it. There are prejudices against the Albany manipulator, as there are against Fred Douglass. I set off the one against the other, and Greeley against Seward, thereby making the outside pressure from New York about equal on both sides. Nobody seems to care much for Mr. Raymond [Henry J. Raymond, editor of the *New York Times*].

Cameron and Forney from Pennsylvania, are working together this time, but on the whole the professional politicians are pretty equally divided between the friends and opponents of Mr. Lincoln, while few pretend to deny that he is the choice of the masses. A survey of the whole field, to-night, makes me think the prospects of harmonious action are good.

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, June 8, 1864]

[June 7, 1864 — Baltimore]

The place of meeting for the Union Convention is called Front Street Theatre . . . because it is in the back part of the city. It must have been in the days of Lord Baltimore, when the street could have appropriately have been called Front Street. It is fully a mile from Monumental Square, and a mile and a half from here. In getting to it one goes up Gay street, after leaving Baltimore, first in a circular direction, and then zig-zag-wise, after the manner of a worm fence. This will probably suit many of the delegates who "refrigerate" themselves frequently by getting around cooling beverages.

All the principal ways to the theatre were alive with people at an early hour of the day, and long before noon the immense building was found to be entirely inadequate for the crowd. Front street, a rather narrow and

very crooked thoroughfare, was a jam of people for a square to the east and west of the theatre, whilst Gay seemed to be as full as possible all the way down to Baltimore street. It was hard work for the street cars to get along at all in several localities. I think there was not less than five thousand people in the theatre within five minutes after the doors were thrown open. They swarmed in, in one tremendous bulge, and settled down in the parquette, dress circle and pit. It was a sea of faces — three seas of faces, in fact. The place for the Orchestra, the orchestra chairs, the stage, are used by the Convention and the reporters. The arrangements are not so good as at Chicago in 1860, but they are the best that could be had at Baltimore.

The temporary organization was smoothly gone through with, and many think the whole work of the Convention will be completed to-morrow.

The great themes of discussion this evening are the platform and the Vice Presidency. No doubt the members of the platform committee can profit by the outside discussions, if they only will. There is a great deal of noise and confusion on the Monroe Doctrine especially. On this point most of the sly old political foxes are in favor of a Janus-faced resolution, one that Mr. Seward can "magnificently explain" to Mr. Dayton, and which our orators can spread themselves over before the people. But the popular outside feeling is strong for a plain, straightforward, bold resolution of affirmance. No person on the streets speaks against a radical platform. But we shall see.

Old Abe seems to be the only nag yet entered. All the indications to-night point to his nomination by acclamation. Andy Johnson and Mr. Hamlin are the men most talked of for Vice. It looks like Hamlin would get it. Some sensible men talk of Robert J. Walker, and others of John Andrew.

I just heard a distinguished New Yorker say we should have a lively time on the platform. I do not think there will be serious trouble.

The outside pressure against the Blairs is terrific.

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, June 15, 1864]

[June 11, 1864]

Perhaps the most tiresome, the most exhaustive work a man can engage in is this thing of attending Conventions, especially National Conventions, as a Reporter. One has to be on his legs so much, standing on stone pavements or the marble halls of first class hotels, that one must soon become as "exhausted" in the proper sense, as the pious Friar Tuck ever was, on

canary or claret. Moreover, during the sittings of the Convention the Reporter must all the while give the closest attention to the proceedings. The chairman may get "mixed up" and wound all around clear out of sight in the labyrinths of total discomboberation, but such would be an unpardonable offense on the part of one with a purple ticket in his pocket. He must always know "where we are." It is hard work; hence, since my last dispatch to you, I have been taking a couple days rest, and must confess I do not yet feel as vigorous as I used to feel, before I had but little hair on the top of my head in the place where the hair ought to grow, and what is left had been turned from gorgeous auburn to dapple gray. If I do not quit getting old I shall be played out before the end of the century. But that is neither here nor there after all. I proceed:

The Baltimore Convention was in many respects remarkable — remarkable for the harmony of its proceedings, the utter want of wire pulling, its courage, and the celerity with which it got along with its business. Only upon one subject was there anything like a want of nearly absolute unanimity — the admission of Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas — and the decision of the majority herein was submitted to by the strong minority with great good nature. All the other animated discussions were simply discussions upon points of order, not upon principles nor upon measures of policy. The Missouri radicals were admitted by a crushing majority, 440 to 4. South Carolina was left out in the cold with the most imperturbable *nonchalance* [sic]. Old Virginia ditto. But there were considerations connected with Tennessee especially, and with Louisiana and Arkansas, which could not be ignored, and in regard to which there was, naturally enough, some difference of opinion. The discussion, however, was not productive of a drop of bad blood. It served to give animation to the Convention for an hour or two, and then all went on as though the delegates were a band of brothers. It was about the same with the nomination of a candidate for Vice President. The friends of the eminent gentlemen voted for were earnest friends, but a bare plurality sufficed to make the nomination certain on the first ballot. I think a similar result would have occurred had Mr. Hamlin or Mr. Dickinson or any of the other candidates been ahead at the conclusion of the roll call. We had got along gloriously so far and weren't going to quarrel over minor matters. That was the feeling of the Convention. . . .

Henry J. Raymond, of New York, a rather tallow-faced — perhaps I should say with a countenance sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought —



diminutive, black-haired, bright-eyed, intellectual looking person, is one of the best readers I ever heard. Murdock himself scarcely surpassed Raymond in clearness, musicalness, strength of voice, whilst his emphasis and cadences are always natural and correct. And he even surpassed himself in the reading of the excellent platform of the Convention, of which he had been the principal composer. Each resolution was enthusiastically cheered, but when Mr. Raymond read, "Resolved, third, That as Slavery was the cause, and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and it must be, always and everywhere, hostile to the principles of a republican government, justice and the National safety demand its *utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic*" — when he had read that sentence, I say, I thought the roof of the building would be lifted from its place by the tremendous and long continued shoutings. The whole platform was most acceptable, and will doubtless meet the hearty approval of loyal people everywhere. The re-affirmation of the Monroe Doctrine was next in popularity to the third resolution. And so our Cleveland folks were cut under all around.

The nomination of Mr. Lincoln was greeted with quite as hearty applause as was the case at Chicago. Bands played but could scarcely be heard on account of the shoutings; cannon were fired in salute, but they seemed to boom far off. It was, in short, the Chicago scene over again. It was somewhat subdued in the case of Johnson, but not for want of enthusiasm. Men couldn't "holler" nor women scream joyfully with so much noise, simply because they had to some extent exhausted their lungs on Lincoln.

Quite an unpleasant episode took place just before the nomination of Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Samuel Wilkeson, the Jacobin correspondent of the *Tribune* thus refers to it:

"Twas not easy to come down from this sublime to the paths that the feet of politicians make in National Conventions. But the haste of men famished for office, or demented with vanity to get ahead in the sorry race for precedence in nominating an inevitable candidate for the Presidency, had to be endured. Iowa must breed men of nerve or men without nerves. The insensibility of one of her sons to the jeers and laughter and scorn of the Convention, while he scrambled through all rules and all courtesy and all decency, to snatch from Cameron of Pennsylvania the distinction of moving the nomination of Mr. Lincoln by acclamation, was a marvelous spectacle. But it furnished the fun of the day, and men were in the end as



grateful to him of Iowa as if he had been a Ravel and had sought before our eyes to slake his thirst out of a bottle whose cork had no end."

This refers to Gov. Stone, who seemed to be very anxious to nominate the President. It was unquestionably the feeling of the Convention, and especially of the reporters, that propriety demanded the nomination from another source — either from the Illinois delegation or from Gen. Cameron, who was chairman of the Pennsylvania delegation, had been one of Mr. Lincoln's confidential advisers, and the man of his Cabinet first to take a stand in favor of emancipation. The galleries, however, stood by Stone, and all must agree that the above attack by the *Tribune* man is grossly abusive, unjust in the main, and entirely uncalled for. It was at most only a question of propriety and if eastern dilettanti cannot appreciate a little determination in the rough, it is their fault and not ours.

Let me conclude with saying that our Iowa delegation was "eminently sound" and practical throughout. If the members did not talk, they were all the time up to snuff, and invariably voted wisely. Some of them are now here, and will remain still a day or two in order to see, in all his magnificent proportions, our Washington elephant. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, June 22, 1864]

[June 16, 1864]

The ratification meeting last night in front of the Patent Office was what you would call out west a rip-snorter — most emphatically a big thing. It would have been, by reason of the numbers in attendance and the enthusiasm manifested "all along the lines," an important meeting almost anywhere. It may justly be stated to have been one of the most, if not absolutely the most, successful popular demonstrations ever had in this city.

Mrs. Linkensale and the two little Linkensales of the female persuasion having got the New York fever, as well as Mrs. Theophilus Dobbs, have left me at home as a sort of general superintendent and dry nurse for Harrie. He had just said his prayers, at 6½ last evening, and was listening with all due attention to my clumsy rendering of "Home, Sweet Home" on the flute, when bang went a great gun, and soon bang! bang!! bang!! went more; in ran the landlady shrieking "rebels! rebels!!" at the top of the feminine gamut, and I had to stop playing long enough to assure her that my life was insured in the New England, and the rebels aforeshrieked were only a Union battery doing the honors to Old Abe and Andy Johnson. Which

was exactly true. The guns thundered away awhile, the boy fell asleep, and I proceeded to the scene of action.

Already the crowd was large. Before dark, there were not less than 10,000 persons in front of the Patent Office. By twilight, bands were playing, rockets were piercing and ensparling the skies, transparencies were lightened up, the whole south front of the immense Patent office and north front of the Post office, immediately opposite, were brilliantly illuminated, and the surging crowd at 8 o'clock stood in as bright a light as at noon-day without a cloud this side of New Foundland.

The Patent office is the largest building in America, and one of the largest in the world. Many of your readers are aware that it is built in the Doric style of architecture, of white marble, with an immense portico extending from each front, supported by fluted pillars and columns some sixty feet in height. The building extends all the way from 7th to 9th streets, and it was from the portico in the middle, and exactly fronting 8th street, that the orators of the occasion spoke. — Half way up the front row of pillars was an immense transparency showing the names of "Lincoln and Johnson" so distinctly that they might have been read by the pilots on the Potomac, a mile away. Immediately above the speakers' stand was a prodigious gas jet, which brought out the word Union in gigantic letters, and above it was an arch of flame. Laurels, flowers, evergreens hung in graceful festoons on the pillars and extended between them. Small transparencies were plenty. On one I noticed the inscription "Emancipation Proclamation — for this act I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God." On another, "America wants no friend who, in war, condemns the justice of her cause; all such are traitors. — *Douglas*." On another, "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. — *Lincoln*." "You should be treated as traitors, tried as traitors, and hanged as traitors. — *Johnson*." All the other transparencies had something good on them, but I have quoted enough to show you that the world moves even here.

The crowd blocked up F street almost all the way between Seventh and Ninth, and pushed its way far down into Eighth. The average number present was about 10,000, but I think there were not less than 15,000 there during the evening. Thousands went away because they could not get near enough to hear well.

Judge Edmunds of the General Land Office, the President of the meeting, talked through his nose, and blew that necessary organ by turns awhile, and

then introduced Judge Kelley, of Pennsylvania, who made an excellent, eloquent speech. He always does. Lane of Indiana made a good speech, chiefly about the platform. Many parts of it were very fine, I always thought they were, from the time I first heard them, about fifteen years ago. All us old Hoosiers have had them committed to memory for a dozen years. Intellectually Henry S. Lane is played out. Howard of Michigan, Denio of Illinois (not of Iowa, as the miserable *Chronicle* has it), Gov. Randall of Wisconsin, and Green Adams of Ky., all made good speeches. Take it all in all, the speechifying was very respectable all around, that of Lane being the most popular to those who were unacquainted with his old jokes, antics and second-hand wit.

The Baltimore nominations and platform were ratified with tremendous enthusiasm, and it was very late when the meeting adjourned, with nine cheers and a savage tiger for Lincoln, Johnson and Grant.

And this reminds me, by association, that I promised to give you sketches of some of the celebrities of the Baltimore Convention. My linked sweetness, however, has already got to be so long drawn out that I must hurry to close the chapter.

Gov. Dennison, the President of the Convention, maugre his ignorance, frankly confessed, of parliamentary rules, was a tip-top presiding officer — quick, decided, and impartial. . . . Preston King is a tun [*sic*] of a man, the Falstaff of politics. He has about three finger-lengths of flesh on his ribs, and elsewhere in the same vast proportions. Herein lies the cream of Jim Lane's joke — "Mr. President," said Jim, who was sitting on one side of the chair, "as the gentleman from New York has his back towards this part of the hall, his voice is so far off we can't hear him at all!" Whereupon old Preston laughed and waddled up to the stand. He is so fat, he speaks after the fashion of excessively fat people. "Bister Chairban," said he, "I think the bere suggestion of by abendbent is all that is necessary. No arguebent of bine can change the deterbination of the Convention, whatever that bay be." He is a jolly old soul, and had the good sense to vote against his own amendment, and admit the Radicals of Missouri. — Tremain of New York is a splendid looking man, with a most dignified and aldermanic abdomen. He speaks splendidly. — Cameron is a free and easy old gentleman, not caring a hill of beans for dignity. He didn't care half so much about our Governor's contest with him on the nominating motion as the reporters did. *Per contra*, he quite admired Stone's pluck and persis-



tency. He and Breckenridge took their tobacco out of the same box, to-wit: your correspondent's. On the whole, Cameron must be set down as a gay, plucky, rather thick-tongued, estimable, good looking old gentleman. Jim Lane is a bald-headed, rough, tough, tall, lank, lean, "rantankerous old cuss." He is a miserable fellow, but he has energy, brass, presumption infinite, and so had a good deal of weight in the Convention. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, June 29, 1864]

[July 4, 1864]

. . . The great event of last week was the resignation of Secretary Chase. Taking the newspapers at a distance for my guide, I judge it created quite a profound sensation everywhere. But I presume it did not affect other communities so thoroughly as it did this. It is the absolute truth that Washington City was not more gloomy upon receiving news of our defeat at Bull Run than it was between the time when Mr. Chase's resignation became known and the time when Mr. Fessenden was appointed in his place. Every intelligent man knew that David Tod, at first nominated to the vacancy, would be hopelessly and irretrievably swamped within a fortnight. Fortunately, the Senate would not permit him to take the vacant place, and, taking time by the forelock, he "declined." — Meantime, gold went up like a kite, government securities went down, and heavy gloom settled upon the hearts of all patriotic men.

"We could have better endured a defeat before Richmond or Atlanta" — that was the expression upon the tongues of all Union men here. I never again want to go through two such days as last Thursday and Friday.

The causes which led to Mr. Chase's resignation are manifold. He has long been the target for the attacks of the Blairs and Thurlow Weed. Nevertheless, they retain the confidence of the Executive. This, of course, could not help making the Secretary restive. The tongue of a gossiping woman is beyond all expression tantalizing and unendurable. Mrs. Lincoln did not scruple to attack the Secretary with all the weapons known to warfare of the speaking organ. She carried this so far that a blunt old Major General, who bore honorable scars upon his body, had to tell her the other day that she must quit it or retire from the White House on the 4th of March. Mr. Chase and the President are essentially different in their organizations. — The one is humorous, fond of jokes, sublimely good natured. He goes to the theatre, tells his stories to every body, and takes things as they come



generally, without apparent fretting and fuming. The other is fearfully earnest, serious, and all wrought up in our national struggle. I do not suppose that Mr. Lincoln is really less in earnest than Mr. Chase, but their organizations are so different that I suspect the President thinks the late Secretary is a fanatic, and he thinks the President is a mere jester. Both are herein in the wrong, but none the less disagreeable associates. It is what they would call "incompatibility of temper" in an Indiana divorce case.

These were the little things which, like gnats, annoyed Mr. Chase. Perhaps the moving cause of his resignation was the failure of this Congress, than which there never has been one more cowardly, to provide the revenue he thought necessary to carry on the government during our fearful struggle. A score or two of fip-and-a-bit members, whom we wouldn't elect road supervisors in Iowa, thought they knew all about all questions of finance, and were continually clogging his system by amendments and by opposition, in fact selfish, though not, in many cases, intentionally so. What with a multitude of little annoyances, therefore, and others of great weight, he thought it best to give up a position which, it must be universally conceded, he had filled with profound ability. Mr. Chase has faults — one, very prominent, that he does not thoroughly understand human nature; another, that he does not stand by his friends; another, that he lacks the highest order of courage — but if there is a public man in the country who is, upon the whole, entitled to more admiration, or has done more valuable service to America, I do not know him. The Blairs, the political bandits generally, may rejoice that he has been compelled, by the force of circumstances, to retire from the public service, but the country cannot help lamenting it.

It is not yet certain that Mr. Fessenden [Senator from Maine] will accept the portfolio tendered him. I think there is no man more capable of conducting our financial affairs. William Pitt Fessenden is confessedly the leader of the Senate. Neither as a debater nor a legislator does he have a superior in that body. — His mind is acute, strong, great. He can see both the details of a great measure and its general effect. There is no man more practical than he, and no man who hates your Utopian statesmen more sharply. He has been chairman of the Senate Finance Committee for several years, and is completely versed in all the financial legislation of Congress and the practical workings of our present system. I am most anxious to learn, when I go down town this morning, . . . that he has accepted.

The only trouble with Mr. Fessenden is, his dyspepsia. It makes him

"cross," hence arises one of the jokes of the street: That it is a rule of the Senate that Sumner must speak daily, Fessenden get mad, and McDougal drunk! . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, July 13, 1864]

[August 15, 1864]

. . . Only a few words about politics: The address of Ben Wade and Winter Davis upon the subject of Mr. Lincoln's proclamation, assigning reasons for not signing the reconstruction bill [Lincoln had pocket-vetoed the Wade-Davis bill on reconstruction of the South], made a great deal of talk in this city, which, as you know, lives and moves and has its being in political discussion. The document is certainly a very ably written paper, and coming from men so well known, from one so long and favorably known to the friends of freedom, cannot help having much influence during the coming campaign. It is now stated, whether with absolute truth I do not know, that another document, written by Winter Davis, arraigning the short comings of the Administration and calling an independent Convention at Buffalo, is being circulated among the prominent men of the country, and is being signed by many. I do not know anything about it of my own knowledge, as above mentioned, but I suspect there is some foundation for the report. It is useless to deny the fact that, since Mr. Chase was somehow got out of the Cabinet, and Mr. Blair somehow kept in, there has been a growing uneasiness exhibited by many of the best friends the country has. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Aug. 24, 1864]

[July 16, 1864]

. . . I have received a letter from a friend in Iowa, of which these are extracts: "I have read your letter in the *Register* wherein you quote from Wilkenson's dirty attack on Stone, and must confess I am at a loss to know whether you intended to defend him or curse him. It is at best a very *dubious* concern. \* \* Your comments have been copied into nearly all the Copperhead papers in the State. (Glad they had lively reading matter for once. — Link.) \* \* I don't myself believe you intended to do Stone any harm, believe you are friendly toward him, as I know he is toward you, but you must admit you sometimes have an extremely *awkward* way of praising your friends."

That is good! My friend is a "gay old boy." It was not my intention, when I commenced writing the letter above referred to, to say one word about any particular member of our regular delegation at Baltimore, or about Gov. Stone, who was placed in the delegation to fill the place of an absentee. — Before getting through, however, it struck me that it would be a simple act of justice to the regular delegates to refer to Mr. Wilkenson's attack, in which no name was mentioned, and to state *whom* that writer attacked. That was my judgment, and I have not yet changed my mind. That it was not incorrect is abundantly proved by the fact that several Iowa papers quoted the obnoxious paragraph before my letter appeared in the *Register*, with the significant inquiry "who is it?" In my opinion it would have been grossly wrong in me, under such circumstances, to have said nothing about the matter. I therefore quoted the "dirty attack," named the target aimed at, and said some few words in explanation, but with no intention of fully "defending" Gov. Stone, and certainly with none of "cursing" him. It is my custom in attacking any body, to hit him "fair and square" between the eyes, and not go at him in a round about style; and I do not know that Governors are entitled to more consideration in this respect than other men. No one could have misunderstood me had I "intended to curse" the Governor. — What I said outside of briefly referring to the matter in a reportorial manner, was strongly in favor of the Governor.

And I say now that if the "Copperhead papers of the State" are trying to make capital against the Governor upon the authority of your correspondent, they are sustaining their reputation mighty well as magnificent liars. If they twist my words into meanings which they will not bear, it is their fault, not mine. I must regret it, but cannot help it.

I intended to give you some extracts from published letters and editorials of leading journals which were favorable to Stone, but it is not necessary, since you have printed the article upon the subject from the *Missouri Democrat*, which is a candid *expose* of the whole matter. I will add that I am very sure no reputable correspondent would have said one word in condemnation of our Governor, had his real object been known. That object was, to defeat Mr. Hamlin's renomination (a thing any delegate certainly had a right to do, and ought to have attempted, if he thought another nomination better and wiser), and not simply to get the "glory" of nominating Mr. Lincoln. It was to accomplish *this* end that Governor Stone labored,



and he labored pluckily, persistently, efficiently except on one point. I stood by him stoutly in the Convention — have done so since, and feel like getting indignant at those who think otherwise. For they must so think without rhyme or reason.

Finally, I do not care about being any further troubled with this matter, nor do I see any wisdom in burdening the press with it further. The Governor can stand a good many “paper bullets of the brain” without being mortally wounded; and I certainly shall endeavor to endure a good many misunderstandings (necessarily incident to correspondence which must be rapidly written) without losing my appetite. This is the second explanation I ever made of anything written for the public press, and it must be the last. Were my own good name only at issue, I should pass it by with the same perfect silence I have ever borne in such cases, but it is not right that I should allow our Executive to be assailed as by my authority without a solemn protest against it.

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, July 27, 1864]

[August 18, 1864]

The political and military “situations” are so interesting just at this juncture, especially from this point of view, that I must go in on my muscle and give your delighted readers another interloping epistle. . . .

Washingtonians live and move and have their being in politics. It is the plain truth they now are giving a hundred times as much attention to the recent pronunciamiento of Ben Wade and Winter Davis, and to discussions arising therefrom, as they are giving to Grant, Sheridan and glorious old Farragut put together.

Forney’s *Chronicle* yesterday morning had a studied, thickly italicized (an earmark of the chevalier himself), heavy, double leaded leader, of which the following is the conclusion:

“We would not insult Senator Wade of Ohio, or Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, by comparing or contrasting them with the Vollandighams or Woods, but with their grave relations to the Union party, and their close connections with it, it is our deliberate and sorrowful judgment that their late manifesto has done more lasting injury among the only consolidated friends of the Government than twenty of the pronunciamientos from the escaped refugees in Canada, or the remorseless prince of discord in the House. Now that Slavery is absolutely gone, we would sacrifice all other



things but the Union to save the Union. We would see Mr. Lincoln himself out of the canvass, with all our attachment to his person and our high sense of his prescience, which so many did not see three years ago who now so readily recognize it, if by such a surrender we could save the country from the election of a representative of a dishonorable peace on the basis of separation. From that catastrophe we must be saved at all hazards."

Being interpreted, Forney, who has heretofore lavished upon Mr. Lincoln more unmixed adulation than any honest person ever gave any man, turns tail and runs before the menaces of Wade and Davis.

It has often been remarked that Mr. Lincoln's worst enemies were his best friends. The Blair tribe, Thurlow Weed, *et id genus omne*, all the "scurvy politicians" that is, have done him more harm by their friendship than they ever could have done if they had been out and out opponents. They have lessened the moral power of the administration. And now they charge upon better men than themselves the doing of more "lasting injury" to the Nation's cause than could have been done by the Copperheads! Very true. Yet it is these very men who have made it possible for such a man as Ben Wade to act so harmfully. Upon them, and not upon him, should the curses of the nation fall. If Abraham Lincoln would but be himself, if he would but shake off from his skirts the bad men who hang thereto, he would have the hearty friendship and support of the masses of the people not only, but of the public men who would add dignity, sincerity, moral power, exalted statesmanship to the administration. Thereby his success in November would be cast beyond any doubt, and by so overwhelming a support that the rebellion could speedily and easily be completely crushed. If he will not pursue this course, he must rely solely upon military success. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, August 31, 1864]

[September 3, 1864]

I haven't been so pleased for a long time as I have been since the Chicago Convention. [At Chicago the Democrats had nominated General George B. McClellan and George H. Pendleton of Ohio for President and Vice President.] Had Grant taken Richmond, or Sherman Atlanta, it would hardly have been better for the Union cause. . . . Only think of nominating Little Mac, who couldn't take Centreville, defended by wooden guns and say 40,000 ragged rebels, for an office whose duties would require him to take lots of Centrevilles, defended by real guns — of Little Mac, who couldn't

get his canal boats into the Potomac, as commander of our navies, and Semmes not dead yet! It is a good joke.

And then Pendleton as a tail to that preposterous kite! But it is an old trick of the "democracy," after all. Whenever they see they have no show for success they always put up their rotten pins to be knocked down. They have a knack of shelving their ambitious nincompoops which is worthy of considerable admiration. The shrewd managers wanted to get Little Mac out of the way, and so they put him up at Chicago, knowing that, after the greenhorns had spent considerable money, a great deal of wind, and lots of sky-rockets, just enough to keep the organization from going to pieces entirely — he would be so badly whaled that he would receive the pity of the charitable and the contempt of the just, with the general regret of his own supporters that Seymour, for instance, had not been nominated, to make at least a decent race. The Chicago Convention, I repeat, could not have done more service to the country, had it been managed by our own friends. It is another instance of the old saying, whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. The Convention was out of its mind. It is an absolute fact that "old strategy" has very little more ability than say the "historian of the Puritans," whilst George H. Pendleton and Vallandigham are as much like as twin cherries on the same stem.

Whereas, before the Convention, the prospects of our success were not brilliant, there is now no sort of doubt that Mr. Lincoln's election is certain and that by an overwhelming majority. The friends of the Union everywhere are jubilant. Dispatches and letters have been coming in from all parts of the country, showing that the apathy which heretofore existed and the bickerings which arose from such documents as the Wade manifesto are no more. I think it perfectly safe to say that in the State of New York Mr. Lincoln has to-day at least twenty-five thousand more votes than he had on last Monday. And a similar fact is true of other States, with the exception, perhaps, of Pennsylvania, where poor Little Mac has less unpopularity with the people than everywhere else.

But it is not only the Chicago ticket which is unpopular. There are thousands who might have supported McClellan and even swallowed Pendleton, who indignantly spurn the platform. It is a peace platform of the worst kind. It requires those who support it to get down on their knees before Jeff Davis and beg his pardon for having attempted to prevent him from destroying the Union. It has no word of condemnation for those who have

brought all the desolation and woes of the last three years upon the country. The man who supports that platform must blot out from his mind and heart all approbation of, and all sympathy for, the Government established by Washington and his illustrious compeers, and yield both his approbation and sympathy to that piratical and heathenish manifesto, the Montgomery Constitution. The platform is made in the interests of the Vallandighams, the Longs, the Woods, the Voorhees, and others of the North, who form the silent co-partners with the red-handed rebels of the South. It must be a solid fool who can believe that any large portion of the people will have anything to do with it. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Sept. 14, 1864]

[September 21, 1864]

The intelligence of Sheridan's great victory in the Shenandoah Valley reached this city yesterday morning, and created a tremendous excitement and a fine glow of enthusiasm all around. Cheers and "tigers" were vociferated boisterously all over the city, whilst a battery of artillery banged a salute of a hundred guns, to the great damage of window glass and the great disgust of Copperheads. I haven't seen a more jolly time since the victory at Gettysburg and at Vicksburg. I haven't seen so many long Copperhead faces at any time since the war began.

The fact is, the opposition had relied upon the defeat of Sheridan, and another invasion of Pennsylvania. They thought that if they succeeded herein, they could, in the first place, dampen the ardor of the friends of the administration, raise the premium on gold and get the tide fairly set to flowing against the friends of the Union. They thought, in the second place, they could thus get up a diversion in favor of poor Little Mac, by swearing if *he* had only been in command, Pennsylvania would not have been invaded, and all that sort of thing. In the third place, they thought they could altogether defeat the draft, and stop reinforcements for the armies by bringing about a depression of feeling and want of confidence in the administration, consequent upon another defeat.

And now, all their calculations knocked "into a forty-foot cocked hat," what shall become of them? They are lugubrious, long-faced, melancholic, and altogether disheartened. They are used up — played out. They show it themselves, and everybody sees it. Poor Little Mac's stock has gone down fifty per cent to day, even in this city, which is half full of secessionists.



Sheridan has carried Indiana, the only doubtful State among those voting in October. You can now bet on Morton. Thus it is, that with the success of our gallant armies in the field, the cause of the country is bright. What must we think of the party which can only succeed upon the defeat of our armies, upon the ruin of the country?

Sheridan has exhibited masterly generalship in this campaign. He has done precisely what ought to have been done, at precisely the right time. He kept a large force away from Richmond, permitting it to eat out of house and home the rebel inhabitants of the Valley — prevented it from crossing into Pennsylvania and Maryland, and finally threshed it so completely that what is left of it is on a panic-stricken foot race toward Richmond, the most fearfully demoralized army of the war. The country owes a great debt of gratitude to Phil. Sheridan and his gallant army, in which, by the way, and no doubt doing manly service, were the 22d, 24th, and 28th Iowa Regiments.

The Little Mac folks had a ratification meeting here the other night, which was quite largely attended by Gov. Seymour's friends — (one of 'em piously asked me as I picked my teeth in front of the National "where the divil the mating-house of the Mick Lillen gentlemen was?") and Union people who had a curiosity to see the show and hear the speechifying. The procession was about half as large as we used to get up in Iowa City during the campaign of '60, on a day's notice. . . . The said speechifying was tolerably dull, very abusive, and very treasonable — so much so that many honest citizens, who had theretofore expressed a preference for McClellan, were indignant, left in disgust, and are now strong for the Rail-Splitter. Such, beyond all peradventure, will be the result of most of the opposition meetings of the campaign. Let the people see, as they must see at these meetings, that the leaders of the opposition are at heart for a disgraceful peace upon the basis of disunion, and the bottom must fall out of the concern. And then it is such a unique concern that when the bottom is gone all is gone. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Oct. 5, 1864]

[September 26, 1864]

"Now by Saint Paul, the work goes bravely on!" In short, I feel jubilant. Copperheads can't knock the chips off Union men's shoulders as much as they did awhile back. Seven big victories right along in a row in the space of one month are enough to make a dumb man shout. And there they are:



— Mobile Bay, one; Chicago, two; Atlanta, three; Winchester, four; Strasburg, five; Fremont, six; and Montgomery Blair, seven. It is the lucky number. The rebellion is, so to say, played out. Its "eyes is sot." The beginning of the end is here!

The seven great victories to which I have alluded, are very diverse in their nature and comprehensive in their results. They make the oligarchy of Richmond tremble — they bring consternation and blank despair into the faces of its sympathizers in the North. They bring joy to the hearts of all who love their country, over and above party, whether they live in the loyal portions or that section which treason has devastated and made miserable. Chicago was a victory for the Union, because the Convention unmasked batteries which had theretofore been concealed. The guns were spiked in less than no time. Farragut's achievements were glorious for the country, and shameful for the Democracy, which had not even a word of enforced sympathy for the navy! The fall of Atlanta was to the rebellion well nigh a Waterloo defeat. Sheridan at Winchester and Strasburg has made the cleanest fighting we have had. Early's whole army of 35,000 men is virtually destroyed. It is fleeing in panic-stricken rout before our pursuing forces, and as it runs it leaves artillery, muskets and supplies all along its course. It can be followed by the immense lines of military *debris*, like the line of Bonaparte's retreat from Moscow. The old Stonewall Brigade is wiped from the face of the earth. It is as completely gone as last year's frost. Five thousand completely fresh men could gobble up all that is left of that "grand army" which was to "capture Washington" and dictate peace under the dome of the Capitol! It would be serene to listen to a peace orator declaiming, just now, upon "the failure of the war." These glorious victories of our navy and army are of incalculable value.

The other two I have named are of a different sort, but are of great value nevertheless. The men of earnest principles who fought the good fight of 1856, under the standard of Fremont, will be glad to learn they were not mistaken in their man. Shabbier treatment than he has had did no man ever receive. Better cause for personal resentment no man ever had. That he forgets both is what, indeed, he ought to do, but which would not be done by any other public man of whom I have any knowledge. [A group of extreme radicals had, in May, nominated Fremont on an independent ticket at Cleveland; Fremont had at first accepted but, after the fall of Atlanta, had withdrawn.] His declination will add very largely to the Union vote, espe-

cially in all those localities where the radical element largely predominates. It is as good as a victory, and hence may well enough be called one.

I never had the pleasure of witnessing a prize fight, but I believe the pinks of civilization who control those amiable institutions have a certain peremptory rule about "time." That is to say, when A. has a fight with B., and Mr. C. keeps tally, so to speak, it is his duty to cry "Time up" on a certain emergency. If A. has been pummeling B. pretty soundly, gouging out one or two of his eyes, smashing up his nose, putting his head into chancery, causing a compound not to say confounded, fracture of his skull, and pounding his lovely face into a nice black-and-blue jelly all around — if A. has done all this, I say, and in consequence thereof B. fails to come up to the scratch again before Mr. C. sings out "Time up!" it is all day with the aforementioned B. If I be wrong herein, some of your British readers can correct me. Mr. Montgomery Blair failed to come to time. He was at last so beautifully whaled by the well-directed blows of the earnest men of the country, that he could stand up no longer. And Mr. Lincoln, with the most admirable imperturbability, cries out, "*The time has come!*"

Mr. Lincoln has done many things for which the country owes him grateful acknowledgments, but he has done nothing, in the political line, calculated to do him more service than removing Montgomery Blair. It will be a source of satisfaction to hundreds of thousands of men who could not be satisfied with the administration upon any other terms whatever. It will infuse enthusiasm into many, very many, who could not be enthusiastic in their support of Mr. Lincoln whilst the Maryland political juggler continued in the cabinet. I do not know what others may think, but as I see, in my mind's eye, the retired Postmaster laying battered and gouged in the arena, utterly unable to come to time, and hear Uncle Abe crying out, "Time up!" to the consternation of the red-haired gentleman's backer, I can only rejoice at the "Deep damnation of his taking off."

And so the political situation is perfectly splendid. The tide is all rushing heavily in the right direction, and it seems to be beyond the power of man to stop it. I do not now believe that Mr. McClellan will carry more than two States — New Jersey and Kentucky — [McClellan actually carried three states: New Jersey, Kentucky, and Delaware] and those by such beggarly majorities as would not suffice to get up a tallow-candle illumination in Berks County. It is even asserted by intelligent gentlemen from that State that Mr. Lincoln will carry New Jersey. McDonald may defeat Mor-

ton in Indiana at the October election, but if so it will be by the skin of his teeth. Ex-Governor Wright says we shall carry the State by a handsome majority. Mr. Colfax, however, is scared, as usual. I guess Wright is right. At any rate, admitting that Morton may be defeated by a small majority, the other States voting on that day will go so strongly Union that Indiana will wheel into line by November. If we had in Indiana few more men not quite so easily frightened as Colfax and Defrees, no harm would ensue. That all the other States will go right, there is no more doubt than that the sun will rise to-morrow. . . .

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Oct. 5, 1864]

[Feb. 9, 1865]

. . . And here must end, for the present at any rate, my connection with the *Register*. My official duties, and labors upon a history of our Iowa troops [published at Philadelphia in 1866, under title *Iowa and the Rebellion* . . .] occupy all my time. I bid good-bye to my readers with feelings like those one has when parting from old friends. I beg them to recollect that this correspondence, which has now been continued about a year, has been hastily written, and ought on that account to receive their charitable criticism. If I have said anything unworthy of a man who loves his country and his fellow men of all climates, nations, and colors, ungenerous toward the party against which I have written, mealy-mouthed or white-livered toward the foes of America and of men — anything which a Christian gentleman could not read without blushing to his family, I shall ever regret it. If I have given any satisfaction or pleasure to the many who have read my lucubrations, I shall be satisfied. I conclude my labors in the columns of the *Register* with the kindest possible wishes for its increasing prosperity and usefulness, and for the long continued happiness of all connected with it, and of its friends everywhere. . . . Good-bye.

LINKENSALE

[Des Moines *Iowa State Register*, Feb. 22, 1865]



## NATIONAL PARTY CONVENTION SITES

1832-1952

[A recent exchange of letters printed in Frank T. Nye's "Political Notes" column in the Cedar Rapids *Gazette* brought to light the fact that nowhere in our historical literature is there a list of the sites of the various political conventions. The question of convention sites arose when Nye wrote in his column: "Only one president was nominated by a convention in a church. Who was he and what was the name of the church?" Nye found his information in a reference work, which declared that the answer was William Henry Harrison, who was nominated in the Zion Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, by the Whigs in 1839. But Joe F. Crumley of Iowa City answered Nye and said there were two presidents nominated in churches — Harrison and Martin Van Buren.

Hoping to straighten out the record, both Nye and Crumley sought aid from the Library of Congress. It developed that two successful candidates — Harrison and Van Buren — were nominated in churches, but that three unsuccessful candidates — Henry Clay, Lewis Cass, and John Bell — were also nominated in churches. Senator Guy M. Gillette procured for Mr. Crumley the complete list of convention sites that is printed below, apparently for the first time in any historical publication, because of the interest stimulated by Mr. Nye in his column. Harvey F. Baugh of the Library of Congress compiled the list, using the convention journals, contemporary newspapers, and files of *Nile's Weekly Register*. No conventions were held prior to 1832 — "King Caucus" reigned before that date. In the following list, only those parties that received electoral votes in the election are listed; this eliminates parties that named candidates but did not poll sufficient votes to make a showing. The list includes the name of the party, the site and city of the convention, the date the convention opened, and the name of the presidential nominee. — *Robert Rutland.*]

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1832

*National Republican*  
The Athenaeum,

*Democratic*  
The Athenaeum,



Baltimore, Md.  
December 12, 1831  
*Henry Clay*

Baltimore, Md.  
May 21, 1832.  
*Andrew Jackson*

*Anti-Masonic*  
The Athenaeum,  
Baltimore, Md.  
September 26, 1831  
*William Wirt*

1836

*National Republican*  
None held.

*Democratic*  
First Presbyterian Church,  
Baltimore, Md.  
May 20, 1835  
*Martin Van Buren*

1840

*Whig*  
First Lutheran (or Zion's) Church  
Harrisburg, Pa.  
December 4, 1839  
*William Henry Harrison*

*Democratic*  
Hall of the Musical Association  
Baltimore, Md.  
May 5, 1840  
*Martin Van Buren*

1844

*Whig*  
Universalist Church  
Baltimore, Md.  
May 1, 1844  
*Henry Clay*

*Democratic*  
Calvert Hall,  
Baltimore, Md.  
May 27, 1844  
*James K. Polk*

1848

*Whig*  
Museum Building,  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
June 7, 1848  
*Zachary Taylor*

*Democratic*  
Universalist Church,  
Baltimore, Md.  
May 22, 1848  
*Lewis Cass*

1852

*Whig*  
Maryland Institute Hall,

*Democratic*  
Maryland Institute Hall,

Baltimore, Md.  
June 16, 1852  
*Winfield Scott*

Baltimore, Md.  
June 1, 1852  
*Franklin Pierce*

1856

*Republican*

National Hall,  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
June 17, 1856  
*John C. Fremont*

*Democratic*

Smith and Nixon's Hall,  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
June 2, 1856  
*James Buchanan*

*American (Know-Nothing)*

National Hall,  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
February 22, 1856  
*Millard Fillmore*

1860

*Republican*

The Wigwam,  
Chicago, Ill.  
May 16, 1860  
*Abraham Lincoln*

*Democratic (1st)*

Hall of South Carolina Institute  
Charleston, S. C.  
April 23, 1860  
(no nomination)

*Democratic (2nd)*

Front Street Theater  
Baltimore, Md.  
June 18, 1860  
*Stephen A. Douglas*

*Democratic (South)*

Market Hall,  
Baltimore, Md.  
June 28, 1860  
*John C. Breckinridge*

*Constitutional Union*

Presbyterian Church,  
Baltimore, Md.  
May 9, 1860  
*John Bell*

1864

*Republican*

Front Street Theater,  
Baltimore, Md.  
June 7, 1864  
*Abraham Lincoln*

*Democratic*

Amphitheater,  
Chicago, Ill.  
August 29, 1864  
*George B. McClellan*

1868

*Republican*

Crosby's Opera House,  
Chicago, Ill.

May 20, 1868

U. S. Grant

*Democratic*

Tammany Hall,  
New York, N. Y.

July 4, 1868

Horatio Seymour

1872

*Republican*

Academy of Music,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

June 5, 1872

U. S. Grant

*Democratic*

Ford's Opera House,  
Baltimore, Md.

July 9, 1872

Horace Greeley

*Liberal Republican*

Music Hall,  
Cincinnati, Ohio

May 1, 1872

Horace Greeley

1876

*Republican*

Exposition Hall,  
Cincinnati, Ohio

June 16, 1876

Rutherford B. Hayes

*Democratic*

Merchant's Exchange,  
St. Louis, Mo.

June 27, 1876

Samuel Tilden

1880

*Republican*

Exposition Hall,  
Chicago, Ill.

June 2, 1880

James A. Garfield

*Democratic*

Music Hall,  
Cincinnati, Ohio

June 22, 1880

Winfield S. Hancock

1884

*Republican*

Exposition Hall,  
Chicago, Ill.

June 3, 1884

James G. Blaine

*Democratic*

Exposition Hall,  
Chicago, Ill.

July 8, 1884

Grover Cleveland

1888

*Republican*

Civic Auditorium,  
Chicago, Ill.  
June 19, 1888  
*Benjamin Harrison*

*Democratic*

Exposition Bldg.,  
St. Louis, Mo.  
June 5, 1888  
*Grover Cleveland*

1892

*Republican*

Industrial Exposition Bldg.  
Minneapolis, Minn.  
June 7, 1892  
*Benjamin Harrison*

*Democratic*

Special Hall built,  
Chicago, Ill.  
June 21, 1892  
*Grover Cleveland*

*Populist*

Coliseum,  
Omaha, Nebr.  
July 4, 1892  
*James B. Weaver*

1896

*Republican*

Auditorium built,  
St. Louis, Mo.  
June 16, 1896  
*William McKinley*

*Democratic*

Coliseum Bldg.,  
Chicago, Ill.  
July 7, 1896  
*William J. Bryan*

1900

*Republican*

Exposition Auditorium  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
June 19, 1900  
*William McKinley*

*Democratic*

Convention Hall,  
Kansas City, Mo.  
July 4, 1900  
*William J. Bryan*

1904

*Republican*

Coliseum,  
Chicago, Ill.  
June 21, 1904  
*Theodore Roosevelt*

*Democratic*

Coliseum,  
St. Louis, Mo.  
July 6, 1904  
*Alton B. Parker*



1908

*Republican*

Coliseum,

Chicago, Ill.

June 16, 1908

*William Howard Taft**Democratic*

Civic Auditorium,

Denver, Colo.

July 7, 1908

*William J. Bryan*

1912

*Republican*

Coliseum,

Chicago, Ill.

June 18, 1912

*William Howard Taft**Democratic*

5th Maryland Regiment Armory,

Baltimore, Md.

June 25, 1912

*Woodrow Wilson**Progressive*

Coliseum,

Chicago, Ill.

August 5, 1912

*Theodore Roosevelt*

1916

*Republican*

Coliseum,

Chicago, Ill.

June 7, 1916

*Charles E. Hughes**Democratic*

Coliseum,

St. Louis, Mo.

June 14, 1916

*Woodrow Wilson*

1920

*Republican*

Coliseum,

Chicago, Ill.

June 8, 1920

*Warren G. Harding**Democratic*

Civic Auditorium,

San Francisco, Calif.

June 28, 1920

*James M. Cox*

1924

*Republican*

Municipal Auditorium,

Cleveland, Ohio

June 10, 1924

*Calvin Coolidge**Democratic*

Madison Square Garden,

New York, N. Y.

June 24, 1924

*John W. Davis*

*Progressive*

Municipal Auditorium,

Cleveland, Ohio

July 4, 1924

*Robert M. La Follette*

1928

*Republican*

Civic Auditorium

Kansas City, Mo.

June 12, 1928

*Herbert Hoover**Democratic*

Sam Houston Hall,

Houston, Tex.

June 26, 1928

*Alfred E. Smith*

1932

*Republican*

Chicago Stadium,

Chicago, Ill.

June 14, 1932

*Herbert Hoover**Democratic*

Chicago Stadium,

Chicago, Ill.

June 27, 1932

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

1936

*Republican*

Municipal Auditorium,

Cleveland, Ohio

June 9, 1936

*Alfred M. Landon**Democratic*

Convention Hall,

Philadelphia, Pa.

June 23, 1936

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

1940

*Republican*

Convention Hall,

Philadelphia, Pa.

June 28, 1940

*Wendell Willkie**Democratic*

Chicago Stadium,

Chicago, Ill.

July 15, 1940

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

1944

*Republican*

Chicago Stadium,

Chicago, Ill.

June 26, 1944

*Thomas E. Dewey**Democratic*

Chicago Stadium,

Chicago, Ill.

July 19, 1944

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

1948

*Republican*

Convention Hall,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

June 21, 1948

*Thomas E. Dewey*

*Democratic*

Convention Hall,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

July 12, 1948

*Harry S. Truman*

1952

*Republican*

Union Stockyards Amphitheater,  
Chicago, Ill.

July 7, 1952

*Dwight D. Eisenhower*

*Democratic*

Union Stockyards Amphitheater,  
Chicago, Ill.

July 21, 1952

*Adlai E. Stevenson*

## HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

### *State Historical Society of Iowa*

During the months of January and February, 1954, the Society has added 143 new members and one new life member. The total membership is now 4,044 active and 677 life members. In addition, the Society publications are mailed out to 371 official depositories, exchanges, and college and tax-supported libraries.

Wilfred D. Logan, staff archaeologist for the Effigy Mounds National Monument at McGregor, has been working on the Society's Keyes Collection of Indian artifacts, arranging, classifying, and studying the material. Mr. Logan is preparing a doctoral dissertation on the Early Woodland Cultures from about 3000 years ago up to about 1100 A. D. At present the Keyes Collection is only open for study and research to qualified archaeologists and graduate students.

The Society has added to the microfilm collection films of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye Gazette* from 1847 to 1948. This addition fills out our coverage of this important newspaper.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S CALENDAR

February 12	Addressed Cornell College Chapel, Mount Vernon
March 15	On KCRI radio and television
March 16	Addressed Dubuque County Historical Society and Dubuque Rotary
March 17	Addressed Engineering Faculty Club, Iowa City, and spoke on WOI, WMT, WHO radio
March 19	On WOI-TV and WMT-TV
March 20	On KXIC, KCRI radio
March 23	Addressed Davenport History Club
March 27	Addressed Caxton Club, Chicago
March 28	Addressed Annual Spring Meeting, Iowa Press Women, Iowa City.



April 2            Addressed Chickasaw County Historical Society, New  
                         Hampton

### *Iowa Historical Activities*

The 50th anniversary of the founding of the 4-H clubs in Iowa will be observed at a celebration in Sigourney on July 14, 1954. Cap E. Miller, the founder of the movement, will be a guest. A short history of the clubs appeared in the February 18, 1954, *Ottumwa Courier*.

Officers of the Marshall County Historical Society, elected on March 11, 1954, are: R. A. Rockhill, president; Mrs. W. H. Arney, vice-president; Mrs. John Mowry, secretary; Max Milo Mills, treasurer; and Mrs. L. P. Belknap, curator.

At the January meeting of the Guthrie County Historical Society all officers were re-elected for another year. They are: Bert Culver, president; Mrs. Jessie Batschelet, vice-president; Mrs. Gladys Kasner, secretary-treasurer. At the February meeting Claude Cook, curator of the State Department of History and Archives at Des Moines, addressed the Society on the marking of historic sites.

Officers elected at a meeting of the Wright County Historical Society in March were: Raynard Richardson, president; Ed Kirstein, vice-president; and Richard Bowman, secretary-treasurer. The Society is making plans for the celebration of Wright County's centennial in 1955.

Iowa's famous State Fair will be 100 years old this year. The first fair was held at Fairfield in 1854; the 100th will be held at Des Moines, August 28 through September 6, 1954. Fair secretary L. B. Cunningham has announced plans for exhibits of the historical and cultural life of Iowa for the past 100 years. Plans are also being made at Fairfield for a covered wagon parade to Des Moines. The trip will take four days to cover the 100 miles between the two cities, and the participants hope to arrive on opening day. The budget for the Fair has been increased by \$75,000 to pay for the special displays, one of which will be a reconstruction of the original fairgrounds at Fairfield.

The Lincoln collection of the late Harry Lytle of Davenport, former curator of the State Historical Society, has been purchased by the Daven-

port Public Museum. The collection, rated as one of the finest in America, consists of 2,600 books on Lincoln in addition to many Lincoln items. The collection will be on display in a new museum that Davenport hopes to build soon.

Carroll County will celebrate its centennial August 22-28, 1954. H. D. Gill, manager of the Carroll Chamber of Commerce, is supervising the plans.

The GAR offices of Iowa, long housed in the state capitol building at Des Moines under the supervision of Miss Amy Noll, have been moved into a special room at the State Department of History and Archives.

An Award of Merit, granted by the American Association for State and Local History, was presented to the Dubuque County Historical Society by Superintendent William J. Petersen of the State Historical Society at their meeting on March 16. The Award was for "a reactivated program including a major increase in membership, a distinct growth of interest in things historical throughout the country and the use of outstanding speakers to aid the society's campaign for the preservation of local shrines and treasures."

The thirty-second annual History Conference was held April 9-10, 1954, at the State University of Iowa under the sponsorship of the history department, the extension division, the college of education, and the graduate college of the University. The following papers were read: "The Transformation of the Indian Community in New Spain, 1500-1810," by Charles Gibson of the history department of the University; "Merchant Princes of the Plains, 1865-1885," by Paul F. Sharp of Iowa State College at Ames; "Reflections on Edmund Burke's 'Reflections on the French Revolution,'" by Louis Gottschalk of the University of Chicago; "When the Airplane Was a Military Secret, A Study of National Attitudes Before 1914," by Marvin W. McFarland of the Aeronautics Division of the Library of Congress; and "Thought Control," by Richard Barnes Kennan of the Headquarters Staff of the National Education Association.

The Chickasaw County Historical Society observed the 100th anniversary of the county at a banquet on April 2, 1954. William J. Petersen, Superintendent of the State Historical Society, was the principal speaker.

The Northwest Chapter of the Iowa Archaeological Society met at Chero-

kee on March 21, 1954. Two films were shown, one dealing with the Angel Mound site in Indiana, which was occupied about 1200-1600 A. D.

Kossuth County is making plans for the celebration of its centennial on July 4-6, 1954. E. H. Hutchins is the general chairman. An historical revue will be presented on July 5, depicting one hundred years of progress in the county. It is under the direction of Mrs. Norman Marble of Grinnell.

North English is planning a three-day centennial celebration, August 6-8, 1954. Russell Ferris is chairman of the program.

The Amana colonies are observing their centennial in 1954 only by the sale of souvenirs. Although no actual settlement at the Amanas took place until 1855, the site was purchased in 1854. The usual type of celebration, with parades and pageants, is not considered appropriate by the older members of the colonies, and therefore the date will be commemorated only by souvenirs bearing the dates: "1854-1954."

## HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

### *Book Notes*

*The People's Health: A History of Public Health in Minnesota to 1948.* By Philip D. Jordan. (St. Paul, Minnesota Historical Society, 1953. \$5.00.) The Minnesota State Board of Health is the fourth oldest in the Union. Dr. Jordan has taken the story of the development of the Board from its earliest days under a Civil War surgeon, Dr. Charles N. Hewitt, to the present, and has produced a sound, documented, and readable account of one state's dramatic fight against disease. From diaries, letters, newspapers, and the dry bones of Board reports has come a story of frontier epidemics and modern polio, of sanitation and the care of the mentally ill, of the "white plague" and the visiting nurse. This is an "informal history," according to the author, written for the general reader and "emphasizing the social aspects of public health and the role of persons and organizations in the program," rather than a financial and administrative account of a state department. As such, the book is a real contribution to social as well as to medical history. Dr. Jordan, professor of history at the University of Minnesota, has brought a wide knowledge and a facile pen to his work and has in every way fulfilled the objectives he set for the book.

*Gulf to Rockies: The Heritage of the Fort Worth and Denver — Colorado and Southern Railways, 1861-1898.* By Richard C. Overton. (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1953. \$5.00.) This railroad history will be of particular interest to Iowans in that Grenville M. Dodge's role in the building and financing of these Texas roads is here thoroughly explored. Dodge has long been known as the "builder of the Union Pacific"; his role as railroad entrepreneur is not so well known. Dr. Overton has used the Dodge Papers at the State Department of History and Archives at Des Moines to excellent advantage in showing the role Dodge played in the Southwest. The author's knowledge of railroads and railroad financing, his wide research, and his brilliant style make this book a real contribution to the story of transportation.

*A History of Ohio.* By Eugene H. Roseboom and Francis P. Weisenburger. (Columbus, Ohio State Arch. and Hist. Soc., 1953. \$6.50.)



Twenty years ago the authors of this work published their first one-volume history of Ohio. The book is now long out-of-print, and the present volume, published during Ohio's sesquicentennial year, brings the state's history up-to-date. Ohio's 150 years of history fill the 380 double-columned pages; some 300 illustrations add to the usefulness and attractiveness of the book. The authors, both members of the history faculty at Ohio State University, and both authors of many outstanding historical works, have produced a model state history. All phases of local life — social, economic, cultural, and political — are presented and integrated with the national picture.

*Farm Policies of the United States, 1790-1950. A Study of Their Origins and Development.* By Murray R. Benedict. (New York, Twentieth Century Fund, 1953. \$5.00.) This large book, of some 500 double-columned pages, contains a wealth of information on the changing farm policies of the United States. Since the farm problem is assuming ever larger proportions in American life and politics, this study should prove of interest as a background for present-day policies. A large proportion of the book deals with the farm problem since 1900; the earlier years, which have been studied in many works, are covered in about the first 100 pages. Thus, Dr. Benedict has done a real service in bringing together all the mass of information on what has been done, or needs to be done, for and by the modern farmer to meet current problems. Agricultural historians will find the book of interest and value.

*Origin of the Land Tenure System in the United States.* By Marshall Harris. (Ames, Iowa State College Press, 1953. \$7.50.) The land tenure system of the United States has its roots in the colonial period, and it is of this period that the author treats in his book. After discussing the problem of land tenure, he details the development and adjustment of the English system, and its further development and adjustment to conditions in the New World. Since the problem of land tenure is part and parcel of the economic, social, and political history of the United States, this study will be of interest to historians in many fields. The author has based his book on research in old colonial records and laws, old state and local histories, and the standard works on colonial America.

*Guide to the Manuscript Collections in the Library of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society.* By Elizabeth Bigger. (Columbus,

Ohio State Arch. and Hist. Soc., 1953. Paper, \$1.50; Cloth, \$2.50.) This is a complete listing of the 1,128 manuscript collections, totaling approximately a million and a half separate pieces, in the Ohio Society Library and will prove of great help to historians in search of original materials. The excellent index makes this publication even more useful, since it lists not only names but also subject matter. Under "Iowa," for instance, the user will find that there is information on the Iowa real estate investments of Jay Cooke in the large Cooke collection; there is the autobiography of Peter Melendy, written in 1901; letters of Dr. John C. Williamson from friends in Iowa; and letters written from Bonaparte, Iowa, 1837-1852, by William Rayner. The Society and Miss Bigger are to be congratulated on this very worth-while publication.

*The American Revolution, 1775-1783.* By John Richard Alden. *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917.* By Arthur S. Link. (New York, Harper & Bros., 1954. Trade edition, \$5.00 each; text edition, \$3.75 each.) These are the first two volumes in the "New American Nation Series," edited by Henry Steele Commager and Richard B. Morris. The new series is designed to replace the original "American Nation" series published a half century ago. Since that time many new concepts and interpretations of American history have been developed, new stores of source materials opened, and new historians grown to maturity. "It is hoped," write the editors, "that this new series will perform for our generation the service that the original American Nation series performed for two earlier generations.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Ordeal.* By Frank Freidel. (Boston, Little Brown & Co., 1954. \$6.00.) This is the second of a projected six-volume biography of President Roosevelt. The first, *The Apprenticeship*, dealt with his early life up to his government service during the first World War. The present volume covers the years from 1919 to 1928, years of Democratic defeat, of the "ordeal" of Roosevelt's paralysis, and of final triumph in election as New York's governor in the year of the Republican landslide, 1928. Dr. Friedel's handling of his subject is brilliant; this biography promises to be an outstanding interpretation of a man and an era.

*George N. Peek and the Fight for Farm Parity.* By Gilbert C. Fite. (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1954. \$4.00.) This story of the

"fight for farm parity," extending from the 1920's through the Roosevelt administrations, and centered around the figure of the fighting George N. Peek, is a welcome addition to the agricultural and political history of the immediate past. It is also an illuminating picture of efforts to influence legislation, of the fortunes of the various McNary-Haugen bills, and of the personalities in Washington during a quarter-century. Dr. Fite concludes his study: "Farmers who enjoy parity or near-parity prices in the mid-twentieth century owe George Nelson Peek a heavy debt. The acceptance of the parity concept is a testimony to the impact which he made on his time, and especially upon American farm policy."

*Railroad Leaders, 1845-1890: The Business Mind in Action.* By Thomas C. Cochran. (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1953. \$7.50.) Dr. Cochran has set out, in this volume, to evaluate the attitudes of America's railroad builders of the nineteenth century. One-half of the book is devoted to his study of sixty-one men whose letters and papers are available for study; the "appendix" that fills the second half is devoted to excerpts from the letters of these men in which they express opinions and attitudes on the various problems of their day. Thus the book is not only an important work on the businessman of the last century, but also a valuable source-book. There is much material on Iowa roads, and the letters of Charles Elliott Perkins of Burlington and Platt Smith of Dubuque will be of particular interest to Iowans.

*Pioneer's Mission: The Story of Lyman Copeland Draper.* By William B. Hesseltine. (Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1954. \$4.50.) The "Draper Collection" of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin is famous among scholars of the early American frontier. This is the story of the man who made the collection and of the man who also "made" the Wisconsin Society. He found it, in 1852, with a fifty-volume library in a bookcase in the governor's office; when he died in 1891 the library held 110,000 volumes and his famous collection of documents and material which he had spent a lifetime in collecting.

*Bourbon Democracy of the Middle West, 1865-1896.* By Horace Samuel Merrill. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1953. \$4.00.) The years covered by this book were, politically, Republican years, with the exception of Grover Cleveland's two terms in the White House. This is an

account of the "Bourbons" who dominated the Democratic party for three decades, who "sat on the lid of public discontent" in their cities and states. Dr. Merrill defines the "Bourbon Democrats," as "a cabal of industrialist-financier entrepreneurs operating within the Democratic party." The author's thesis is a new approach to Middle Western Democracy and as such should be of great interest to political historians.

*Valley of Democracy: The Frontier Versus the Plantation in the Ohio Valley, 1775-1818.* By John D. Barnhart. (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1953. Cloth, \$5.00; paper, \$3.75.) The author has made a study of the settlement of the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois from the point of view of the struggle of the frontiersman with the planter aristocracy of the South to establish democratic governments. The concluding chapter discusses the application of the "Turner thesis" to this particular part of the frontier. Dr. Barnhart has found that the growth of democracy in the Ohio Valley closely conforms to Turner's interpretation of American democracy.

*Iron Road to Empire: The History of 100 Years of the Progress and Achievements of the Rock Island Lines.* By William Edward Hayes. (New York, Simmons-Boardman, 1954. \$5.00.) The author of this railroad history, a former railroad telegrapher, newspaperman, and writer, is now assistant to the president of the Rock Island Railroad, in charge of public relations. His story of the road is a popular, readable account of the building and financing of the Rock Island, from pioneer beginnings to the present day.

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*Iowa*

Fred Schwengel of Davenport has prepared a pamphlet on the Masons of Davenport entitled "100 Years of Masons in Davenport: History of the Blue Lodge in Davenport."

A history of Marshall County is being prepared by Gerard Schultz of Indianola, who has recently completed a history of Warren County in collaboration with Don Berry. The new history will be based on original materials such as county records, newspaper files, letters, and personal interviews. The book will be published by the Marshall Printing Company.

On October 6, 1953, the *Mount Pleasant News* began publication of excerpts from a diary written in 1852 by Eliza Ann Macauley who, with her brother Thomas and her sister Margaret, made the long overland trip to California.

In connection with the 50th anniversary of the Wright Brothers' famous flight at Kitty Hawk, George Shane contributed an article to the *Des Moines Register*, December 13, 1953, on the history of flying in Iowa. The article is illustrated by several pictures of first flights in Iowa, dating back to 1906.

The *Tipton Advertiser*, with its issue of November 12, 1953, completed one hundred years of continuous weekly publication. A history of the paper appeared in that issue.

Waldorf College at Forest City celebrated its 50th anniversary October 8-10, 1953. Many stories on the history of the college appeared in the *Forest City Summit* during October.

A brief history of journalism in Hancock County, written by Phyllis Fleming, was published in the September 16, 1953, *Garner Leader*.

A history of the Muscatine school system, from 1839 to the present, appeared in the December 30, 1953, *Muscatine Journal*.

An article in the March, 1954, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* by George H. Miller — "Origins of the Iowa Granger Law" — throws new light on the interpretation of the agrarian unrest of the 1870's. The law passed in 1874 in Iowa, regulating the rates to be charged by the railroads, has always been called the "Granger Law" — a name leading to a misunderstanding of the motivating factors behind the passage of the law. Dr. Miller shows that the most active interests pushing for the law were the merchants of the Mississippi River towns, whose business had been seriously hurt by the railroads, rather than the Grangers who complained of high freight rates. Furthermore, he points out that the greatest cause of complaint against the roads was the discrimination in freight rates between various towns and areas, rather than the high rates of freight alone. This article is well worth study, for its new concept of the background of railroad regulation.

The April, 1954, *Annals of Iowa* contains an article that will interest students of political history. Thomas James Bray, an attorney of Oskaloosa



and long active in political circles, is writing a book — "Iowa's Rebirth of Freedom" — dealing with the Progressive Movement in the early years of the twentieth century. His article in the *Annals*, entitled "The Cummins Leadership" deals with the career of Albert B. Cummins and reveals not only the work of Cummins as governor and senator, but also recounts the activities of the forces that opposed him. This is an account of the Progressive-Standpat struggle within the Republican party by one who participated in the events, and as such will be of value to the historian.

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## COVER

An early view of Atlantic, Iowa, one of the towns developed as a result of the building of the Rock Island Railroad. From the 1875 *Andreas' Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa*.

## THE DOMESTIC FINANCES OF SECRETARY OF WAR W. W. BELKNAP

By Philip D. Jordan\*

When General William Worth Belknap was sworn in as President Grant's Secretary of War on November 1, 1869, he was an Iowan of property and distinction.<sup>1</sup> There was then little, if anything, in his personal or public life to indicate that he was destined to be a central figure in the widespread corruption of the Grant administration.<sup>2</sup>

On March 2, 1876, at 10:20 in the morning, when a distraught Belknap handed his resignation to President Grant, one of the worst scandals of the administration broke over Washington and the nation. Later that same day the House voted articles of impeachment against the Secretary for "high crimes and misdemeanors while in office," the charges being that over the past six years Belknap had accepted some \$20,000 from Caleb P. Marsh, in return for Marsh's appointment to the post tradership at Fort Sill. Marsh had testified before the House Committee on Expenditures in the War Department that he had made an agreement with Mrs. Belknap, a few months before her death in 1870, and that payments had been made annually, first to her and following her death to the Secretary.<sup>3</sup> Apologists for Belknap tried to prove that he had thought the money came from the estate of his wife's sister, Mrs. Bower, whom he had married in 1873.<sup>4</sup> The Secretary's resignation left some doubt as to the jurisdiction of the Congress, and the impeachment trial, which was held before the Senate in July, acquitted him, "less than two-thirds of the Senators present voting guilty."<sup>5</sup> Those who voted against impeachment explained that they had done so not on the

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<sup>1</sup> *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 1:225; *Dictionary of American Biography*, 2:147-8.

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent short account of the impeachment, see James F. Rhodes, *History of the United States, 1850-1877* (7 vols., New York, 1910), 7:189-91.

<sup>3</sup> *House Report No. 186*, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., March 2, 1876.

<sup>4</sup> *Des Moines Register*, March 10, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> *House Report No. 791*, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., Aug. 2, 1876.



question of his guilt but in the belief that they had no power to impeach a government official who had resigned.

It has been said that Belknap's love of fine living was a contributing cause of his impeachment and resignation from office on March 2, 1876.<sup>6</sup> This charge may be true, but it is most difficult to prove. However, there is little doubt that the Belknaps lived handsomely during their Washington years, perhaps enjoying a somewhat higher standard than befitted a Cabinet member.

Immediately after the news of the impeachment, stories began to appear detailing the style of living of the Belknaps. Much attention was given to the wardrobe and jewels of Mrs. Belknap.

Her wardrobe was said to be the richest in the city, and every dress made by Worth in Paris. She had hats and boots and jewels to match every toilet. Her feet are her pride, and the envy of her lady friends. Although of more than the ordinary height of women — being five feet six inches tall — she wore one-and-a-half boots. Every boot and slipper she wore came from Paris. . . . The jewels Mrs. Belknap most frequently wears consist of a string of large pearls around her neck, with a beautiful pendant of diamonds. Her earrings are two solitaire drops for each ear. An aigrette of diamonds is the only ornament she ever wears on her shapely head, amid the puffs of dark hair that are always arranged to suit the contour of the handsome face. . . .<sup>7</sup>

In spite of these stories, it can be shown that the Secretary's household expenses were annually less than his salary. In other words, Belknap was living within his income. Such a statement, of course, does not imply that he was unwilling to receive monies which stemmed from other sources or that he did not accept them.

Naturally, when the scandal broke, there was much talk about how the Secretary and his wife could live and entertain so splendidly. A story from Washington claimed:

A great deal has been said about the ex-Secretary being forced to obtain money surreptitiously in order to maintain his extravagant style of living. He has kept a strict account of his expenses during his housekeeping experience, now extending over about three years, and his books and bills show that month by month, with

<sup>6</sup> Cyrenus Cole, *Iowa Through the Years* (Iowa City, 1940), 346-7.

<sup>7</sup> Des Moines Register, March 10, 17, 1876.

one and possibly two exceptions, his expenditures were less than his salary as Secretary. His house rent, for example, is only \$1,500, and has never been more than \$2,000. These facts will serve to indicate the probable defense in the approaching trial, and to show that the popular judgment in the case has been at least in some respects a hasty one.<sup>8</sup>

Belknap was born in Newburg, New York, September 22, 1829, received the usual common school education, and was tutored in law by H. Caperton of Georgetown, D. C., after being graduated from the College of New Jersey at Princeton in the class of 1848.<sup>9</sup> The handsome young man emigrated to Keokuk in 1851 to hang out his shingle and, within a few years, to be elected to the state legislature as a Democrat. He found Keokuk a charmingly sleepy, but thriving, village on the Mississippi and loved the community until the day of his death in October, 1890.<sup>10</sup>

In one of his first letters from Iowa, Belknap spoke of the "State of my adoption," and painted a pen picture of his combined office and living quarters. "A blazing fire of crackling hickory adds its enchantment to the room and while the musty and dust covered law books serve to give a professional aspect to affairs all disagreeable feelings are counteracted by the air of bachelor like coziness."<sup>11</sup> When business carried him along the Des Moines, he saw a most beautiful countryside. His pleasure, when he took rooms at the Galt House in Farmington, was somewhat marred by bedbugs. Keokuk, however, was a "right good" place to stay, for the weather was delightful, the town healthful, and business brisk.<sup>12</sup>

The Civil War interrupted Belknap's law practice, and like many another Hawkeye youth, he turned to soldiering. He was mustered in on December 7, 1861, as a major in the Fifteenth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, served at Shiloh and Vicksburg, marched with Sherman to the sea, and was honorably discharged on August 24, 1865, with the rank of brevet major general.<sup>13</sup> His war letters reveal a competent officer who nevertheless was not

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 21, 1876.

<sup>9</sup> Mrs. William G. Belknap to Belknap, May 12, July 9, 1851, *W. W. Belknap Papers*. (These family papers are temporarily in the possession of the author.)

<sup>10</sup> *New York Tribune*, Oct. 17, 1890; *Washington Evening Star*, Oct. 13, 1890.

<sup>11</sup> Belknap to his sister, Clara Belknap, Oct. 28, 1851, *Belknap Papers*.

<sup>12</sup> Belknap to Clara Belknap, Aug. 31, 1852, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> For Belknap's war services and the record of the Fifteenth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, see Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (Washington, 1904), 1:207; Lurton D. Ingersoll, *Iowa and the Rebellion*

insensitive to army mismanagement. "On duty I strive to do what is expected of me," Belknap wrote from the vicinity of Vicksburg, "and I know that since I have been in the service I have tried to do the work assigned me, as it should be done, and yet often when posting pickets, or visiting the front or when engaged in something, which ought to have my individual attention I catch myself thinking of home. . . ." He spoke also of corruption and cowardice in the service and of the "unpatrotic conduct of many men whom the people of the country regard as fine and perfect. . . ." <sup>14</sup> He was bitter toward those who remained at home, speculating in cotton, abusing men of different opinion, "praising up the everlasting nigger," and worshipping the memory of John Brown.

The war years could not last forever. A more mature Belknap returned to Keokuk to resume his law practice and to take a greater interest in the Republican party, which he had joined. Before the close of 1865 he was appointed collector of internal revenue with headquarters in Keokuk. A salary of about \$125 plus commissions frequently brought him a monthly income of more than \$500. <sup>15</sup> This, together with law fees, made him one of Keokuk's most prosperous citizens. Belknap invested his capital cannily, so that when he was appointed Secretary of War he possessed sound securities and real estate holdings.

In addition to his Keokuk residence, with an assessor's evaluation of \$3,700, Belknap owned a half of a city lot, an interest in thirty-two acres near the city, a two-thirds share in a thirty-five-acre farm, and held complete title to a two-and-a-half-acre tract. A lot in Keokuk's Estes addition was valued at \$60. He thought his personal property, including household goods and furniture, was worth \$1,500. There were also land holdings in Texas, which his father, General William Goldsmith Belknap, had acquired while serving in the army prior to the Mexican War. Belknap reckoned his total property at \$13,760. <sup>16</sup> His second wife, Carrie Tomlinson Belknap, also owned some property.

(Philadelphia, 1866), 246-68; A. A. Stuart, *Iowa Colonels and Regiments* (Des Moines, 1865), 289-94; Jacob A. Swisher, *Iowa in Times of War* (Iowa City, 1943), 134, 135, 180; W. W. Belknap (ed.), *History of the Fifteenth Regiment, Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry* (Keokuk, 1887); Mildred Throne (ed.), *The Civil War Diary of Cyrus F. Boyd, Fifteenth Iowa Infantry, 1861-1863* (Iowa City, 1953).

<sup>14</sup> Belknap to Clara Belknap, Feb. 7, 1863, *Belknap Papers*.

<sup>15</sup> Salary receipt, Collector's Office, First District, Keokuk, June 12, 1869, *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Holographic penciled memo, undated, but headed: "W. W. B. became Secretary of War on Nov. 1, 1869. At that time he owned the following property." Some of



The Belknaps first took up residence at the Seward House in Washington, where they remained from the day that Belknap took the oath as Secretary of War until they found more comfortable quarters in the Kennedy House. They later moved to the Wilkes House, where they were able to do light housekeeping. On April 26, 1872, the then widowed Secretary moved to the Arlington. His rent from November 1, 1869, to April 26, 1872, amounted to \$10,501.76, and extra entertainment amounted to \$925, making a total expenditure for the two years and six months of \$11,426.76. Belknap's salary for the same time was \$19,723.39. Board and room at these hotels averaged about \$300 a month.

Belknap remained at the Arlington until December 1, 1873, a stay of one year and seven months. His total room and board for this period was \$6,506.25, and special entertainment came to \$612.<sup>17</sup> The Secretary did most of his important entertaining at a restaurant owned by J. P. Crutchet, who was noted for his superior food and liquors. Between January 30, 1872, and February 22, 1876, Belknap entertained here some thirty times at a total cost of \$2,097.50. On the first date his guests were residents of Iowa, and the supper charge was \$150. In February, 1872, he paid \$225 for a supper party in honor of Princeton graduates. On March 16, 1875, a dinner for fourteen came to \$91. Early in 1876, a small group of intimate friends was served ham, boned turkey, pickled oysters, and sandwiches for \$33.<sup>18</sup>

Carrie Tomlinson Belknap died on December 27, 1870. In 1873 the Secretary married his late wife's sister, Mrs. John Bower. The new Mrs. Belknap was anxious for a home of her own and, during the fall of 1873, rented a residence at 2022 G Street. A roomy house four stories high, it had at least three bedrooms, two parlors, a library, a dining room, and several long halls. As wall-to-wall carpeting was then in vogue, Mrs. Bel-

the Texas lands were acquired in 1836, when General William G. Belknap was stationed at Fort Jessup in Louisiana. He, with one or two others, became the owner of a league of land in Sabine County. Additional land was acquired in Jasper County. John F. Hankle to W. W. Belknap, Nov. 12, 1880; John H. Broocks to Anna Belknap, Nov. 6, 1890; Purchase agreement between W. G. Belknap and others, Parish of Natchitoches, Louisiana, March 4, 1837; Statement of Settlement, Belknap and Walker Heirs, Morris Tract, Sabine County, Texas, New York, March 17, 1914, *ibid*.

<sup>17</sup> Pencil resume by Belknap of expenses in various hotels, drawn up July 17, 1876, *ibid*.

<sup>18</sup> J. P. Crutchet's receipted bill, Jan. 30, 1872-Feb. 22, 1876, in the amount of \$2,097.50, *ibid*. On the reverse are inventories of four smaller dinners.



knap ordered that all floors be covered. The best quality Brussels was used for most of the rooms. An Aubusson carpet was selected for the parlor at a cost of \$450, and a Smyrna carpet was chosen at \$225 for the library. She also ordered fourteen hassocks to be specially manufactured at a cost of \$15. The total bill for carpeting, pads, stair carpets, and laying amounted to \$1,198.96. This statement was dated November 14, 1873, and was paid on February 9, 1874.<sup>19</sup>

The Belknaps moved into their new home on December 1, 1873, but there was much to do before the place was fit to entertain guests. A china dinner service for twelve persons was purchased for \$50, wallpaper came to \$102.97, ornaments and ceiling molding amounted to \$32.30, a large gilt frame cost \$25, and a piano was purchased in New York for \$600. Later in the year, Mrs. Belknap ordered a coachman's livery at \$55.<sup>20</sup>

There is no doubt but that the Belknaps were determined to live as befitted Cabinet members. Their monthly household expenses averaged around \$400, depending upon the season of the year and the amount of entertaining they did. November, 1874, may be considered a typical month. Belknap kept careful accounts during his entire stay in Washington, and his entries, together with receipted bills, show that during November he spent the following:<sup>21</sup>

Gas	16.50
Milk	9.51
Subsistence Dept., U. S. Army	41.15
Servants	62.00
Washing	25.00
Oysters	7.00
Fuel	74.75
Park and Tilford (groceries)	7.03
Marketing	28.85
Butter	70.20

<sup>19</sup> Invoice of W. and J. Sloane, Carpet and Floor Cloth Warehouse, 649 Broadway, New York, *ibid*.

<sup>20</sup> Invoices of Nicol Davidson & Co., 686 Broadway, New York, Dec. 27, 1873; G. C. Shaw, paperhanger, Washington, Jan. 1, 1874; John Alexander, upholsterer and paperhanger, Pennsylvania Avenue between 12th and 13th streets, Washington, April 8, 1874; Thomas A. Wilmurt, 54 East 13th Street, New York, Feb. 28, 1874; F. G. Smith & Co., 427 Broome St., New York, Jan. 9, 1874, *ibid*. The retail price of the piano was \$1,000, but Belknap was given a reduction of \$400.

<sup>21</sup> The expenditure for wine was above average during November, but this probably was due to the approaching holiday season.

Ice	7.18
Rent	167.00
Wine	239.54
	<hr/>
	755.71

The Subsistence Department of the Army stocked 106 different items, ranging from allspice, beef, corn meal, and lemon crackers through molasses, pickled onions, pork, and raspberry jam, to rice, saleratus, sugar, tea, and Worcestershire Sauce. Belknap could, if he wished, place special orders for goods not stocked regularly. He availed himself of this privilege frequently, ordering sweetbreads, kidneys, buckwheat, codfish, mock turtle soup, and oatmeal. The family must have been especially fond of fresh beef, for month after month beef stood high on his account from the Subsistence Department. Thus, in May, 1874, 53 pounds, at sixteen cents a pound, were delivered; in June, 40 pounds; in July, 12 pounds; in August, 11½ pounds; in September, 27 pounds; in October, 104 pounds; in November, 94 pounds; in December, 127½ pounds. During the first quarter of 1875, there were 198 pounds of fresh beef delivered to the home on G Street. In addition, ham, veal, and fresh pork were ordered in quantity. Belknap never ordered less than \$18 worth of merchandise from the Subsistence Department, and his highest bill seems to have been \$60.63.<sup>22</sup>

This statement, covering the month of January, 1875, is interesting, not only because it reveals the price of groceries, but also because it indicates what seem to be unusually large purchases:<sup>23</sup>

13½ lbs. bacon	13¼ cents	1.79
82 rations of soft bread	4.1 "	3.36
55 lbs. fresh beef	17 "	9.35
3 lbs. factory cheese	17 "	.51
4½ lbs. chocolate	61 "	2.74
16 lbs. roasted Java coffee	40 "	6.40
45 lbs. family flour	4 "	1.80
33 lbs. ham	14.2 "	4.68
10 lbs. lard	15 "	1.50

<sup>22</sup> Receipted inventories from the Subsistence Department, United States Army, for the months listed. This department should not be confused with the Quartermaster's Department. For a brief sketch of the Subsistence Department, see Thomas H. S. Hamersly (comp. and ed.), *Complete Regular Army Register of the United States* (Washington, 1880), Pt. 2, pp. 340-43.

<sup>23</sup> Receipted inventory, Subsistence Department, Jan. 31, 1875, *Belknap Papers*.

6 cans string beans	36	"	2.16
5 lbs. macaroni	14	"	.70
2 cans ground mustard	12	"	.24
4 bottles of olive oil	47	"	1.88
6 cans of French peas	34	"	2.04
14 lbs. salt	11½	"	.21
1 box of salt	9	"	.09
110 lbs. laundry soap	5½	"	6.05
6 boxes of large sardines	27	"	1.62
15 lbs. of brown sugar	10.2	"	1.53
10 lbs. cut loaf sugar	12	"	1.20
8 lbs. granulated sugar	11.2	"	.89
1½ lbs. of black tea	1.20		1.80
1½ lbs. green tea	1.00		1.50
18 cans of tomatoes	13	"	2.34
1 gal. cider vinegar	25	"	.25
6 cans yeast powder	12	"	.72
14 lbs. shin [bones]	8	"	1.12
2 doz. eggs	35	"	.70
12½ lbs. buckwheat	4.8	"	.60
6¾ lbs. codfish	8	"	.54
1 broom	32	"	.32

---

\$60.63

Staples such as these were supplemented, of course, with a variety of other foods. During garden months, when fresh vegetables were in season, the purchases for marketing amounted to as much as \$87.19 a month. Bakery goods — dinner rolls, cakes, pies, Boston brown bread — came from at least two of Washington's best bakeries. Ice creams and cake were procured from Ida M. Demonet, 1714 Pennsylvania Avenue. Her bill for January, 1874, amounted to \$12.25. The Secretary generally purchased whisky, wines, and Bass Pale Ale from Thomas Russell at the Sign of the Golden Eagle on Pennsylvania Avenue. His statement from Russell for March, 1875, amounted to \$80.63. Thomas Bolden, whose statements carry no printing and give no address, furnished an astounding amount of oysters. During March, 1875, for example, the Belknaps received twenty-eight quarts, fourteen pints, and three dozen, at a total cost of \$11.33.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Receipted inventories of the following accounts: Wm. F. Hunt, market produce, July 3, 1876, \$7.19; F. Desfosse, French and American Baker, 806 Nineteenth Street, March 8, 1875, \$2.00; George S. Krafft, Baker and Confectioner, 1746 Pennsylvania Ave., June 30, 1876, \$6.00; Ida M. Demonet, French Confectionery, 1714 Pennsylvania,

In addition to viands purchased in Washington, Belknap regularly ordered large quantities of butter from Vermont and Pennsylvania and had wine shipped from Philadelphia. Such household items as pressing irons and lamps came from New York. Now and again, Park and Tilford shipped from New York superior quality peaches and cherries.<sup>25</sup>

The Belknaps gave up their G Street home after the impeachment, having lived there two years and three months. During this period their rent amounted to \$3,922, their household expenses to \$7,499.34, and their entertainment to \$2,674.14, making a grand total of \$14,095.48. Belknap's salary for the same time was \$18,308.20. The difference between the total salary and the total household expense was \$4,212.72. Belknap reckoned that the entire salary which he had received from the time he was sworn in on November 1, 1869, until he resigned on March 2, 1876, was \$52,187.15, and that his total household expenses were \$32,640.49. The difference between these two figures was \$19,546.66.<sup>26</sup> It must be remembered, however, that Belknap did not include the expenses for clothes for himself and family, nor did he take into account other purchases which were not applicable to his household. No mention, for example, was made of transportation, taxes, physician's fees, purchases for individual and personal use, or gifts and presents. Belknap calculated that his average salary was \$686 a month, that his average household expense was \$430, and that the average monthly excess of salary over household expense was \$256. This was a narrow margin indeed when Belknap's total scale of living is considered and when one remembers that such additional items of expense as suggested above were not included in his computations.

That Belknap himself was disturbed by money matters after he resigned the secretaryship is perfectly apparent in a letter he wrote his son, Hugh, nineteen days after his retirement. In this pathetic communication, Belknap spoke first of the "malignant attacks of enemies and the bitter personal as-

Jan. 1, 1874, \$12.25; Thomas Russell, 1213 Pennsylvania Ave., \$80.63; Thomas Bolden, oyster merchant, March 1, 1875, \$11.33, *ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> Receipted inventories, S. C. Noble, country produce, St. Albans, Vt., Oct. 27, 1874, \$70.20; J. & J. Darlington, country produce, Ivy Mills, Pa., Dec. 29, 1874, \$13.50, and March 30, 1875, \$13.00; Steamer *Geo. H. Stout*, freight from Philadelphia, Nov. 6, 1874, \$15.79; Jones & Hubbell, House-Furnishing and Hardware, 920 Broadway, Aug. 11, 1874, \$4.40; Park & Tilford, fine groceries, 921 Broadway, Oct. 27, 1874, \$7.03, *ibid*.

<sup>26</sup> Pencil summary, in Belknap's hand, of total household expenses and total salary, dated July 17, 1876, *ibid*.



saults in newspapers" and insisted that the War Department had been run in an economical manner. He concluded with a discussion of tax payment on lands he owned, saying: "Every cent counts now and may God give me strength to go through the future with success and strength."<sup>27</sup>

One Iowan has left a description of Secretary Belknap in better days:

In appearance, General Belknap was a pronounced blonde. In person, he was not much above medium height, stout, full-habited, inclined to embonpoint. His face was oval, his cheeks full, his complexion very fair, his blue eyes large and lustrous; his head large, his brow broad, his glossy flaxen hair, soft and wavy; his beard full and luxuriant. It is no exaggeration to say that his whole bearing was noble and Apollo-like.<sup>28</sup>

After the scandal broke, stories appeared in the newspapers of the changed appearance of the once-handsome Belknap. An army officer reported on a visit to the ex-Secretary:

Words fail to express how this man has aged and suffered during the last few days. His flowing beard was knotted and tangled, his eyes and his sunken cheeks made up a picture of woe and despair that would have touched a heart of stone. . . . He was unmanned. He choked and sobbed several moments. . . .<sup>29</sup>

After the first shock of the scandal, Belknap recovered his equilibrium and faced the future courageously and conquered it. His friends, who never lost confidence in him even during the mud-slinging days of 1876, lent him strength and hope. Even his enemies, among them some who had jeered and scorned the most, came to respect him. His old comrades of the Fifteenth Iowa stood by him. Toward the close of life, Belknap associated himself with an eastern law firm, busied himself with the Grand Army of the Republic, and maintained a wide correspondence with friends and members of his family. He died in the autumn of 1890, at the age of sixty-one, was given a military funeral, and lies buried in Arlington Cemetery.

<sup>27</sup> Belknap to his son, Hugh Belknap, March 21, 1876, *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Edward H. Stiles, *Recollections and Sketches of Notable Lawyers and Public Men of Iowa* . . . (Des Moines, 1916), 360.

<sup>29</sup> Des Moines Register, March 17, 1876.

## THE ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD IN IOWA

By Dwight L. Agnew\*

The Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, which had entered Iowa City on January 1, 1856, with fanfare and promise, reeled under the heavy blows of depression and Civil War and failed to revive with the return of business activity.<sup>1</sup> In terms of miles of track constructed, the history of the M & M from 1860 to 1866 can be told briefly. The road had been started as an Iowa enterprise under the aegis of the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad of Illinois, and had been built westward from Davenport to Iowa City between July, 1855, and January, 1856. By 1866 the end of track had been pushed westward a mere forty miles beyond Iowa City. The lack of activity brought threats of suits, efforts at reorganization, and final demise.

From the standpoint of progress in construction the M & M was virtually dead during the war years. The bonded indebtedness was constantly increasing, while no dividends were paid. In October, 1860, there had been hopeful signs. "Advices from New York," noted an Iowa City paper, "bring the gratifying intelligence that the bonds to a large amount of the Mississippi and Mo. Railroad have been negotiated and that henceforth the work will be pursued forward steadily and rapidly to the Missouri." Company bonds were quoted in Wall Street at 68 or 69. "At the figures we name," said the editor, "they ought to satisfy the most greedy seekers for gain, even among the denizens of Wall street." In December a committee of stockholders in Iowa City had investigated conditions and prospects of the M & M. Not having access to the books of the Company, they had written Hiram Price of Davenport, one of the original organizers, for information. Price replied with figures for the last six months of 1859, showing that the net earnings would not meet the interest due on bonds. At a loss

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<sup>1</sup> For the early history of the Rock Island and the Mississippi & Missouri railroads, see the following articles by Dwight L. Agnew: "Beginnings of the Rock Island Lines," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 46:407-424 (Winter, 1953); "Iowa's First Railroad," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 48:1-26 (January, 1950); "The Mississippi & Missouri Railroad, 1856-1860," *ibid.*, 51:211-32 (July, 1953).

to know why Price had selected that particular period as an exhibit, the committee recommended that the city attorney enter suit against the road to obtain the desired information.<sup>2</sup> Apparently the threat was not carried out.

A board of directors meeting, held in New York on November 5, 1861, had considered ways and means for reviving the fortunes of the M & M. The company faced many difficulties. The track had been extended less than 100 miles from Davenport, although by the terms of the Iowa land-grant bill it should have been 135 miles out. Interest on bonds already issued was in arrears, and M & M bonds could not be sold "unless at a ruinous sacrifice." The company found it impossible to pay the contractor, Thomas C. Durant, who had agreed to proceed with construction in advance of payment. The board of directors waived claim to such materials as Durant might furnish and agreed to let him use the road as he completed it until the company could pay him in full. The board further resolved that the net earnings of the road not otherwise appropriated should be applied on construction of the road west of Marengo in Iowa County.<sup>3</sup>

On December 10, 1861, another mortgage on the M & M was executed with the issuing of bonds known as second mortgage construction bonds to the amount of \$700,000. These bore interest of 7 per cent and were to be paid on January 1, 1882. They were secured by "the entire property and franchises of the Company, together with all its lands now owned or which may hereafter be acquired by said Company." The mortgage was to be a third lien on the road from Davenport to Iowa City and on the branch from Davenport to Muscatine and a second lien on the remainder of the road.<sup>4</sup>

The mortgage only added to the company's problems, however. The road was extended so slowly that there was no appreciable increase in net earnings. Interest on bonds could barely be met, and no dividends were possible. Joseph Sheffield, financier for the Chicago & Rock Island construction, had considerable investments in the M & M. He realized, as indeed many others must have, that some plan must be formulated to re-

<sup>2</sup> Iowa City *Republican*, Oct. 3, 1860; Jan. 2, 1861.

<sup>3</sup> "Copy of Resolutions passed at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Mississippi and Missouri Rail Road Co'y, held in New York Nov. 5/61." *Leonard Collection*, 3-2-1-17. (The *Leonard Collection* at the State University of Iowa Library, Iowa City, is contained in four-drawer filing cases; 3-2-1-17 signifies third case, second drawer, first folder, seventeenth item.)

<sup>4</sup> Copy of Indenture of Mortgage in *ibid.*, 3-2-1-23.



build the battered financial structure of the Iowa railroad. As an investor in county bonds in Iowa he stood to lose money in expensive litigation which might continue for years unless the activities of the railroad were made acceptable to the counties involved. On receiving word from Judge James Grant that the Iowa courts had failed to uphold the validity of the Washington County bonds, and that the case had been appealed to a federal court, Sheffield wrote to Clark Durant (uncle of Thomas C. Durant) that he was willing to pay his share of the expenses of the suits. "I have \$20,000," he wrote, "and feel sore as to the way I have them, and still more so as to the rascals in Iowa." He then outlined his suggestions "for the rescue and continuation of the Miss. & Misso. R. Rd. . . ." He advocated that all bondholders fund their coupons for the period of two or three years it would take "to complete the road to Des Moines. . . ." Then, he thought, all would be "interested in pulling together," interest on all classes of bonds could be paid, lands of the company would be made valuable, and Durant would "have some value to the large amount of security" he held.

While unless something is done, and that very speedily, to prevent foreclosure & break down, the bonds will be of little or no value in market. If the 1st bondholders seize the road and sell it, as they assuredly will do, unless those who have interest in protecting it will rescue it, the 2d Mortgage & Land Grant bonds can never come up again.

Sheffield proposed also that five of the nine directors be selected from New York bondholders.<sup>5</sup> Much of what he proposed was put into effect.

Ebenezer Cook, a Davenport banker, in writing to Durant in February, 1863, probably put his finger on the worst malady from which the M & M suffered:

I agreed with you perfectly when you say "As matters have been conducted the parties most in interest have the least to say about the management of the affairs of the company." I might add I think with perfect propriety that for the last two or three years nobody has had any management of the affairs except the Superintendent (and necessarily he can pay but little attention to it) and the Station agents, Engineers &c &c. Such an utter and complete departure from every Sound and proper principle and policy

<sup>5</sup> Sheffield to Clark Durant, Apr. 1, 1862, *ibid.*, 3-4-26-9.



in the management of the affairs of a corporation of that magnitude I never before saw.

Cook might have said that the company was also feeling the loss of financier Henry Farnam, who had been, until his withdrawal, the leading spirit of the enterprise. Cook was right in saying:

The truth is there is no one here who is allowed to look after any of the affairs except as they are specially instructed to do so. I do not say these things to reflect upon any one for shortcomings or any thing of the kind, but as I have said to you & others, there is a clear and decisive want of a *head* to the concern.<sup>6</sup>

Whatever the fortunes of the company, Durant saw fit to buy up stock early in 1863. He may have felt that the prospects of the Pacific road would soon increase the price of M & M securities. He authorized Cook to purchase stock at as high as ten cents on the dollar, but told him to try to buy at from five to seven cents. "I went to work," wrote Cook, "but found that parties who had any Stock of any amt were not inclined to sell at as low figures as I talked say, 5 to 7 — The general reply was 'Well I don't think it is worth any thing but I have paid for it & may as well lose all or nearly all &c.' " Cook did manage to purchase some at eight and some at ten cents.<sup>7</sup>

In the summer of 1863, Cook, on behalf of the M & M, and John F. Tracy acting for the Chicago & Rock Island, drew up an agreement for dividing freight receipts on the road west of Davenport for items hauled to Chicago. Instead of prorating the receipts on the basis of miles hauled, the M & M received a larger proportion. From Grinnell, for example, while the pro rata division of \$100 would give the M & M \$39.73, the agreement gave the company \$44.03.<sup>8</sup>

In October, 1863, Cook drew up for his own consideration a report on M & M operations from July 1, 1858, to July 1, 1863. He concluded that the increase in earnings was not such as should have been expected from the return of business activity after the depression, the increased length of road, and the proportionately greater earnings of other western roads. "Take it *all in all* and it is not a very flattering Statement. Its publication would not enhance the price of either our Stock or Bonds in the market."

<sup>6</sup> Cook to T. C. Durant, Feb. 18, 1863, *ibid.*, 3-4-40-32.

<sup>7</sup> Cook to T. C. Durant, Feb. 3, 1863, *ibid.*, 3-4-40-33.

<sup>8</sup> Cook to T. C. Durant, July 11, 1863, *ibid.*, 3-4-40-34.

Iowa Senator James Harlan expressed to Cook the opinion that the railroads of Iowa were "not getting their fair share for carrying Mails & Government Men & munitions of war" and that if the companies would make "proper representation" to the Iowa delegation, he would try to "get Justice done."<sup>9</sup>

While the M & M was crawling at a snail's pace through central Iowa, another road just to the north was doing little better. By 1864, what was to become the Chicago & North Western was made up of three roads — the Galena & Chicago Union, from Chicago to Clinton; the Chicago, Iowa & Nebraska, from Clinton to Cedar Rapids; and the Cedar Rapids & Missouri River from Cedar Rapids to a point near Nevada in Story County. During the later war years there was much talk of combining the efforts of the M & M and the Cedar Rapids & Missouri River Railroad for the final push to Council Bluffs. An agreement signed on January 14, 1864, by the company presidents did in fact provide for such a union. The friends of the two roads, so the agreement stated, believed that it would not be profitable to construct parallel lines to the Missouri at that time, that "perseverance in the attempt to do so might Endanger or greatly delay the construction of both." The point of connection was not to be farther east than Marengo.<sup>10</sup> The roads concerned had agreed to unite but could agree neither on the route to be followed nor on the exact point of intersection.

At some time during 1865 the principal bondholders and stockholders of the M & M drew up a plan for the sale of the road and submitted the plan in the form of an agreement to be signed before August 1, 1865, by any wishing to participate. The road was to be sold under decree of foreclosure and "purchased for the benefit of the Creditors and Stockholders assenting" to the agreement.<sup>11</sup> Bonds and stock in the new company were to be issued according to the following schedule:

	<i>Old Bonds</i>	<i>New Bonds</i>
First Mortgage, Eastern Division	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Second Mortgage, Eastern Division	400,000	200,000
Oskaloosa Division	590,000	295,000
First Mortgage Land Grant	3,612,000	1,806,000
Second Mortgage Land Grant	695,000	347,500

<sup>9</sup> Cook to T. C. Durant, Oct. 10, Nov. 25, 1863, *ibid.*, 3-4-40-38, 3-4-40-39.

<sup>10</sup> A copy of this agreement is in *ibid.*, 1-3-29-15.

<sup>11</sup> The *Leonard Collection* (1-3-29) has several letters and documents bearing on the proposal.

Income Bonds	560,000	280,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	\$6,857,000	\$3,928,500
First mortgage bonds reserved for completion of the Road to Des Moines, 41 miles, and for additional rolling stock		1,571,500
		<hr/>
Total amount of new mortgage		\$5,500,000
Preferred Stock of New Company		3,500,000
		<hr/>
		\$9,000,000
Common Stock of New Company		3,000,000
		<hr/>
		\$12,000,000

The trustees acting for the creditors were John P. Yelverton, president of the Bank of North America; Frederick P. James; and David M. Hughes, all of New York.<sup>12</sup>

In October, 1865, John A. Dix, president of the M & M, called a meeting of the stockholders to "consider business of vital interest to the road." A Des Moines paper commented:

The Davenport *Gazette* pertinently asks, "What's up?" That's what we want to know. Does it mean consolidation, or accelerated movements, or some new speculation, or — what? The people out this way are beginning to get up in their honest bosoms considerable confidence in the M & M R. R. Is this confidence to be dashed to the ground by a lick back on the part of the Company? We shall wait, and hear more on this subject, before going off diagonally into spasms.<sup>13</sup>

What "was up" was made clear in a circular letter dated October 20, 1865, which General Dix addressed to the stock and bond holders. He reviewed the financial history of the M & M. The company had received the first division of the road from the contractors on July 1, 1856. Out of the earnings of the first six months, \$184,193.82, interest on bonds had been paid and a 4 per cent dividend declared. From then on, however, the situation had gone from bad to worse. For instance, for the year ending June 30, 1860, the gross earnings were \$207,688.97, the net earnings \$92,899.-

<sup>12</sup> "Agreement for the Reorganization of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company," *ibid.*, 3-2-1-25.

<sup>13</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Oct. 24, 1865.

45, but the interest on the bonded indebtedness was \$145,300. Obviously no dividends were possible. By 1862 the company was so in arrears on interest that an arrangement had to be made for funding the bond coupons. Operating expenses had been about 60 per cent of the earnings, but the equipment of the road was badly in need of repair, and during 1865 the operating expenses had increased to 65 per cent. The M & M had been compelled to dispose of land-grant bonds at 60 per cent in order to complete the road within a limited time, making the cost of the road west of Iowa City 40 per cent higher than it should have been. The bonded debt was now \$6,851,754.64. By January 1, 1866, the company would be in arrears on interest to the amount of half a million dollars. The only means of satisfying the creditors was by sale or complete reorganization.<sup>14</sup>

Rumors of the impending sale encouraged the people of Des Moines and other communities of western Iowa to think that the road might be extended. The *Des Moines Register* commented: "We have no intelligence confirmatory as yet of the sale of the M. & M. R. R. to the Rock Island Company. We have been anxiously looking around for information on this subject, but have failed to obtain it. The news of the sale gave our people considerable enjoyment; and we hope that it will be confirmed."<sup>15</sup>

In April, 1866, even before the sale was consummated, news came to Des Moines that the road was to be extended without delay. The *Register* reported:

Officials belonging to the road are busily engaged hunting up hands to prosecute the work. Such is the intelligence which we have received, and we are inclined to think that Rip Van Winkle, who has been asleep since the commencement of the Christian era, is about to wake up, and see the time of day. The M. & M. R. R. has been going to do big things for a long time; but the only contract which it has ever taken and executed, was a heavy sleep lasting for half a dozen years. Still, we guess the road is now in good hands, and will come through this time.

The people of Jasper and Polk counties were asked to give "proper encouragement" to the railroad. The promoters no doubt hoped that right of way and station grounds would be donated. The *Register* remarked that "any encouragement which can be extended to the successor of the old M. & M.

<sup>14</sup> Iowa Board of Railroad Commissioners, *2nd Annual Report, 1880, 94-5.*

<sup>15</sup> *Des Moines Register*, Nov. 8, 1865.



corporation by the citizens of Jasper and Polk Counties, will assist materially at this juncture in hastening the day when the snort of Old Behemoth shall wake the echoes of the Des Moines Valley.”<sup>16</sup>

To the *Jasper Free Press*, J. B. Grinnell wrote:

The Rock Island Company is very strong in funds and purpose, and have every motive to reach Des Moines at the earliest day possible. A few days since I saw Mr. Durant, the Prest., and Mr. Tracey [sic], the Sup't, in New York, and I can assure you that it is their wish that the words of law “as near the old line as practicable” may be regarded in the location. They will expect liberal treatment as to the right of way, and I cannot doubt that you will have a locomotive visit at an early day, and I trust on a located line, which will promote the interests [of] your people, who have waited so long, patiently and with courage.<sup>17</sup>

As the time of the sale drew near, activity increased. “The state of the case is just this,” said the *Davenport Democrat*. “The ‘sinews of war’ have been provided. The entire amount of money requisite for extending the road to Des Moines is now provided — lying idle in New York, awaiting the sale of the M. & M. Road under the late foreclosure.” Engineers were engaged in determining the exact location of the line between Kellogg and “Skunk Bottom.” A gang of laborers was at work cutting ties and quarrying rock. There was no scarcity of labor. Reynolds and Saulspough were at work again on a contract between Kellogg and Newton. “This string of facts goes to show that there is now something more than talk in this extensive matter.”<sup>18</sup>

To manipulate the transaction by which the Chicago & Rock Island took over the M & M properties, a new corporation was formed in Iowa by the interested parties. Articles of incorporation for the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company of Iowa were filed in the office of the recorder of Scott County on May 28, 1866. The *Des Moines Register* reported:

The object of the organization is to extend the M. & M. R. R. from Kellogg's station to Council Bluffs at once. Good morning, Mr. Kellogg? How d'ye do, Mr. Council Bluffs? Soon we shall say, “farewell, horses, and coaches, and hacks,” and then we shall

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 25, 1866.

<sup>17</sup> *Jasper Free Press*, as quoted in *Des Moines Register*, May 30, 1866.

<sup>18</sup> *Des Moines Register*, July 4, 1866.

go ridin' on a rail. Railroad prospects are bright, coruscating in superb loveliness.<sup>19</sup>

Trustees of the second mortgage of M & M properties, Thomas C. Durant, Jacob Wetmore, and Robert B. Minturn, brought suit for foreclosure. This original bill was supplemented by cross-bills which took care of the remaining M & M property. Details of the sale, which took place in Davenport on July 9, 1866, were arranged by a committee composed of George Stanton, Jr., John Elliott, and Blakely Wilson. When Thomas F. Withrow, Master in Chancery, opened the sale, Ebenezer Cook, on behalf of the newly created Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company of Iowa, bid \$800,000 for the first division of the road from Davenport to Iowa City and the branch to Muscatine. John Elliott, on behalf of the bondholders, advanced the bid to \$900,000, and Cook took the property for \$1,000,000. The Oskaloosa division was sold for \$300,000, the land grant for \$200,000, and the western division, from Iowa City to Council Bluffs, for \$600,000. The M & M properties were thus sold for a total of \$2,100,000. "It has fallen into good hands," said the *Davenport Democrat*. "The people may rest assured that the day of inactivity is over on this line of road, and immediately the dirt will commence flying in good earnest along the Western Division. The money has been raised to do the work, and iron is already provided for, and in a short time the westward progress of the M. & M. will be rapid."<sup>20</sup>

As soon as the M & M properties had been acquired by the new company, a consolidation was effected with the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad Company of Illinois. The new corporation was the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company. Stock certificates of the Illinois company were called in, to be replaced by stock in the new corporation.<sup>21</sup>

When news of the sale of the M & M came to Council Bluffs a local editor surmised that there would be a "rattling among the dry bones" on the old line.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the railroad which had lain so long dormant sud-

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, June 28, 1866.

<sup>20</sup> George H. Crosby, *History of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Company* (Chicago, 1904), 13; Iowa Board of Railroad Commissioners, *2nd Annual Report, 1880*, 95; *Davenport Democrat*, as quoted in the *Council Bluffs Bugle*, July 26, 1866.

<sup>21</sup> Circular of the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad Company, *Leonard Collection*, 1-2-14-18.

<sup>22</sup> E. Douglas Branch, "The Rock Island," *The Palimpsest*, 10:220-21 (June, 1929).

denly awoke, stretched, and became active. Bids were opened for the entire line from Kellogg, forty miles east of Des Moines, to Council Bluffs. The contract was awarded to the experienced firm of J. & J. Casey. In the opinion of the *Des Moines Register*, James and John Casey had built, in their thirty-five years of activity, more miles of railroad and canal than any other firm in the country.<sup>23</sup>

In August, 1866, as sale of the M & M was confirmed by action of the United States Circuit Court, preparations were made for definite location of the line west of Des Moines. Either Dallas County or Madison County might be awarded location of the main line. "We presume," said the *Register*, "that nothing has been done as yet to indicate which of the two counties . . . will be fortunate enough to hold the pole which knocks the persimmon."<sup>24</sup> As finally located, the line just missed the northern boundary of Madison County.

Construction west of Kellogg began in October. By December "things were moving all along the line" from Kellogg to Newton. Two thousand laborers and nearly one thousand teams were finishing up the grading and bridging. On a heavy cut near the North Skunk River, a "ponderous steam shovel" was "making sad inroads, scooping out the dirt in a frightful manner, while all over the surface of the ground, men and teams" were "making the dirt fly in earnest."<sup>25</sup> Out in Cass County, about half way to Council Bluffs, this great activity brought encouragement and hope.

Take courage then, farmers and stock growers of Cass County, for this road will soon be built through to Omaha to connect there with the great Union Pacific Railroad, in which the said Chicago and Rock Island Company have a heavy interest. A bright day is surely dawning upon the people of western Iowa. Our farms will advance in value, and the more we improve them, the more our comfort and prosperity will increase. Our rich and fertile soil — our beautiful groves of timber — our climate, unsurpassed for health — our sparkling streams of water, all combined, hold out an inviting hand to the working men of the pent up cities of the east, asking them to come *now*, while lands here are cheap, and make for themselves a home on the broad and fertile prairies of our beautiful County of Cass.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Des Moines Register*, June 23, 1869.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 15, 1866.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1866.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 26, 1866, quoting the *Cass County Messenger*.



While the Rock Island was struggling to renew its westward march, the Chicago & North Western to the north was closing in on the Missouri River. The completion of the road to Council Bluffs in April, 1867, necessitated a change in Rock Island routing so that the track would less closely parallel that of the North Western.<sup>27</sup>

When the first Rock Island train pulled into Des Moines in September, 1867, a crowd gathered at the station, but there was no celebration, for which everyone was thankful — "nobody cared to make or listen to speeches."<sup>28</sup> By December grading was in progress thirty or forty miles west of Des Moines; track laying was to begin as soon as the bridge across the Des Moines River had been completed. "We are apprized," said the *Register*, "that it is the intention of the Company to commence laying track west of here as fast as the locomotive can creep along after it crosses the river. . . . Our neighbors out in that direction can begin to drill their ears for the music of screaming steam." Council Bluffs, however, had long been accustomed to that sound. "We hear so much whistling *now*," said the *Bugle*, "from the locomotives of the Union Pacific, Chicago and Northwestern, Council Bluffs and Sioux City, and the Council Bluffs and St. Joe Railroads, that when the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific railroad gets here, we will hardly discover the accession to the whistling."<sup>29</sup>

During the latter part of 1867 and the early part of 1868, however, a well-organized conspiracy aimed at thwarting efforts to extend the Rock Island beyond Des Moines was engineered by what the Iowa papers called the "New York Ring." Rock Island stockholders were divided into two camps — one supporting President Tracy in his efforts to extend the road, the other attempting to channel the money from the sale of the stock for the benefit of the old stockholders. The history of the case began on September 13, 1867, when the executive committee of the Rock Island resolved to extend the line to Omaha. Funds on hand were insufficient to cover the cost, and it appears that David Dows and John F. Tracy were authorized to provide for the issuing of such stock as would be necessary.

In November or December, David Crawford, representing Henry Keep, Rufus Hatch, and other Wall Street speculators, approached Tracy with a

<sup>27</sup> *Yesterday and Today* [History of the Chicago & North Western Railway System], (Chicago, 1905), 45; *Des Moines Register*, March 27, 1867.

<sup>28</sup> *Adel Gazette*, Sept. 12, 1867.

<sup>29</sup> *Council Bluffs Bugle*, Dec. 19, 1867.



proposition for using the proceeds of the sale of stock to line the pockets of the principal stockholders. The plan called for issuing stock to the amount of about \$6,000,000, which was to be turned over to the old stockholders in return for a payment of 50 per cent. Such an issue would increase the company's cash on hand to about \$4,500,000, a sum which could be used ostensibly to extend the road but actually to enrich the speculators. Henry Keep would control the election of Chicago & North Western directors who would then make a contract with the Rock Island to pay \$300,000 or \$400,000 a year as an award for not building the road beyond Des Moines. The Rock Island would then have a large yearly surplus to distribute among the stockholders. Tracy told Crawford that he thought Dows would not consent to the scheme.<sup>30</sup>

On December 30 the stock market responded to a sudden weakening of Rock Island stock which opened at 98<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and closed at 92<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>. The drop was due to a report then circulating that the Rock Island directors had sold stock to pay for the construction of the road from Des Moines to Omaha. The New York *Tribune* financial editor was certain that the rumors would prove to have no foundation and that John Tracy and David Dows would so report.<sup>31</sup> The fact was, however, that 49,000 shares of stock had been issued as authorized by the directors and were sold on the market without notice to the public. The New York stock brokers, involved as heavy holders of original stock, moved swiftly to prevent use of the proceeds of the sale — close to \$5,000,000. In suits brought by Rufus Hatch, Fisk and Beldon, and D. R. Fanshawe against the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company, the directors were charged with illegal use of the 49,000 shares. On January 6, 1868, Judge Cordoza of the Supreme Court of New York issued injunctions which would have effectively tied up the money intended for construction. Before the injunction could be served, however, Tracy transferred the books and cash to Chicago. There Judge Drummond of the United States Circuit Court for Northern Illinois was applied to for an injunction, an action which caused the books and cash to be transferred again — this time to Davenport, Iowa.<sup>32</sup>

To forestall further legal tangles, President Tracy and his group requested the Iowa legislature for assistance. The matter was presented in

<sup>30</sup> Des Moines *Register*, March 25, May 13, 1868.

<sup>31</sup> New York *Weekly Tribune*, Jan. 1, 1868.

<sup>32</sup> Des Moines *Register*, June 10, 1868, quoting the New York *Herald*.

both houses and both took similar action. The Senate recommended that the committee on railroads make inquiry into the matter of legislating for the early completion of the Rock Island, evidence having been presented that certain stock speculators in the city of New York had obtained an injunction against the officers of the company, restraining them from further expenditure of money in construction. The company was willing to complete the road except for this "outside influence." Railroad committees in the Senate and the House presented bills which were passed without much opposition. In the course of the debate Senator John Meyer of Newton thus presented the case:

The question is, whether the New York sharpers under the leadership of Rufus Hatch shall have this money to use up in dividends, or whether the other party under the leadership of Tracy shall have the money to use in the completion of the road. . . . Suppose Tracy does not intend to put this road to the Missouri river. What do we do? We resume these lands from Tracy, Reuben [sic] Hatch, and the whole caboodle of them, if I may use the expression.<sup>33</sup>

The act approved February 11, 1868, entitled "An Act providing for and Requiring the early Construction of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad," contained several provisions significant for the future of the road: (1) the consolidated company, that is, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Company, was to complete its line so as to connect with the Union Pacific within two years from the passage of the act; (2) lands granted the M & M were reassigned to the new company but with the stipulation that the latter was to be subject to such regulations and tariff schedules as might be fixed by the General Assembly; (3) the 49,000 shares were to be used in construction; (4) election of directors was postponed until June, 1869; and (5) the company was to relinquish to Pottawattamie County all claims for bonds or agreements to take stock.<sup>34</sup>

The "Ring" sued out an injunction restraining the directors from accepting the act. At a meeting of the directors in Chicago, the New York mem-

<sup>33</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1868, 86; *Des Moines Register*, Feb. 5, 19, 1868; *Laws of Iowa*, 1868, Chap. 13. While action on the law was pending, the "New York Ring" obtained an injunction from a court in New York City restraining the officers of the Rock Island from applying to the Iowa legislature for assistance — to no avail, of course. *Des Moines Register*, Feb. 12, 1868.

<sup>34</sup> *Laws of Iowa*, 1868, Chap. 13.

bers of the board, against whom the injunction was filed, resigned to be replaced by others not so hampered. On application, Judge Drummond then issued an injunction against these directors, whereupon they resigned, and the remaining members moved to sanctuary in Iowa. In lieu of the presence of a full board, the Iowa legislature resolved that the president and secretary of the board could accept the act of the Assembly in the name of the board of directors.<sup>35</sup>

Upon acceptance of the act, Tracy and Ebenezer Cook found themselves accused of being in contempt of the United States District Court for Northern Illinois. Judge Drummond issued an attachment against them and dispatched a United States Marshal to Davenport to bring them in. Tracy and Cook were arrested and taken to Keokuk where they appeared before Judge James M. Love of the United States District Court to show cause why they should not be taken to Chicago. The Rock Island *Argus* thus described some of the circumstances:

The attorney of the Wall Street Brokers accompanied the marshal, and was exceedingly anxious to have him take them to Keokuk by boat, which would, in its course, necessarily make many landings in Illinois. It is not known how many "plug uglies" the brokers had on board the boat, nor what processes were awaiting the parties on their appearances at some Illinois landing. The marshal, however, refused to be a party to any such proceeding, and took the gentlemen to Keokuk by rail, leaving the attorney and his associates to return to Keokuk by boat.

Judge Love refused to send anyone beyond the state of Iowa to be tried for acts committed within the state. He held that Judge Drummond's injunctions were not operative outside his own district. "This," said the *Register*, "is good sense and should be good law."<sup>36</sup>

Tracy and his aides replied with legal devices of their own. George Chandler, the Chicago lawyer who had made out the affidavit for arrest and who had accompanied the marshal on his errand to Davenport, was sued for malicious arrest and false imprisonment. Chief Justice George G. Wright of the Iowa Supreme Court issued an order requiring the directors of the Rock Island to proceed with construction and enjoining all persons from interfering with their actions. "Thus far," said the *Argus*, "the State

<sup>35</sup> Des Moines *Register*, June 10, 1868.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 15, 1868; the article is in part a quotation from the Rock Island *Argus*.



of Iowa and the friends of the road are ahead, and we think Wall Street might as well abandon the hunt and find some new scheme for replenishing its coffers.”<sup>37</sup>

The battle was not entirely over, however. In June, the “Ring” attempted to grasp control of the company at the time of the regular election, although the Iowa legislature had specifically provided that the 1868 election should be omitted. Upon their arrival at the Sherman House in Chicago, however, members of the “Ring” were confronted with injunctions which effectively blocked their attempts to reorganize the company. On the question of filling vacancies in the old board, a compromise resulted in the election of persons acceptable to both parties.<sup>38</sup> The fight was over.

Meanwhile, construction continued in Iowa, and President Tracy made use of every opportunity to popularize the Rock Island road. When the Iowa legislature adjourned in April, 1868, a special train took members of the General Assembly whose homes were in eastern Iowa to points in that direction. At the invitation of John P. Cook of the Rock Island, the editor of the Council Bluffs *Bugle* returned home by a round-about way — east on the Rock Island to Marengo, across to Blairstown on the Chicago & North Western, and thence west. The Rock Island special made the run from Des Moines to Marengo, ninety-two miles, in three hours, with twenty minutes out to repair a rail and thirty minutes for dinner. ‘This road is one of the best, if not the best, in Iowa,’ wrote the editor. ‘It is as smooth and level as a ‘house floor,’ and being constructed with continuous rail, or rather rail bolted together, that eternal click and jerk heard and felt on roads constructed with rail connected by ‘chairs,’ is not experienced upon it.” The editor commented on the fact that the whole distance from Des Moines to Marengo along the line of the road, wild prairie two years before, was now covered with extensive farms, showing, he declared, “what beneficial results to the country are caused by the construction of railroads.”<sup>39</sup>

By the summer of 1868 the road was completed twenty miles west of Des Moines. When end of track reached De Soto in Dallas County, “the good ladies of that new little city” provided a dinner for the railroad men

<sup>37</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>38</sup> Des Moines *Register*, June 10, 1868. For other items relative to the controversy, see *ibid.*, Apr. 15, 29, June 10, 1868; Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Apr. 23, Sept. 10, 1868; *Fanshaw v. Tracy et al.* (4 Biss. 490), United States Circuit Court, Northern Illinois.

<sup>39</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Apr. 16, 1868.



in honor of the occasion. In July the construction trains were running forty miles west of Des Moines. Beyond that point the "summit" required a cut of one mile, fifty feet in depth. On this section of the road six thousand men with three thousand teams hacked away at the tough blue clay. By the end of August track had been pushed to the "Middle Coon," a branch of the Raccoon River in Guthrie County. "So tramps our Road on its way to the Pacific!" exclaimed the *Register*. "All hail the day! We already feel one day nearer Council Bluffs; and in the romantic figurism of T. Tilton, we soon shall see the final welding of 'the iron marriage ring,' which shall wed Des Moines to the Queen of the Slope forever, and marry the two cities together in commercial interest as they ever have been in social sympathy and mutual pride."<sup>40</sup>

During the last week of August, 192 carloads of construction material were sent to the end of track. Hemlock ties were brought from Michigan. Ordinary freight was held back to make room for timber and rails. Work was progressing on the bridge over the Middle Coon. Meanwhile, work was in progress on the western end from Council Bluffs east. From Mosquito Creek a thousand-foot-long cut had been tackled by a large force under Contractor John Jones who was anxious to place more men and teams on the job as soon as they could be found — "a hundred laborers could here find employment any moment."<sup>41</sup>

At the end of October, track was laid fifty-six miles west of Des Moines, and a party of Chicago railroad men and Des Moines citizens made "a flying trip" to the end of the track. The new roadbed was skillfully constructed, and the track carefully laid. "The cars passed over the new road with less jar and clatter than they make on three-fourths of the old roads," reported the editor of the *Register*, "and it is the enthusiastic testimony of all passing over it, that it is the best new road they ever traveled over. And it should be — for it is to be the great right arm of the Union Pacific."<sup>42</sup>

In November track layers began working east from the depot grounds in Council Bluffs, and it appeared that the whole line might be completed by the first of January. Frost and snow, however, delayed construction effec-

<sup>40</sup> Des Moines *Register*, July 15, Aug. 19, 1868; Council Bluffs *Bugle*, June 4, July 23, 1868.

<sup>41</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 5, 1868, quoting the Council Bluffs *Democrat*; also see *Register*, Sept. 2, 1868.

<sup>42</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Oct. 21, 1868; Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Oct. 22, 1868.

tively. About the middle of February, 1869, construction trains began running again west of Atlantic, and track laying was resumed on the section from Council Bluffs eastward. For the bridge over Mosquito Creek, teams were hauling long timbers through Council Bluffs. Great piles of ties were stacked up at the depot of the Council Bluffs & St. Joseph Railroad, waiting for construction trains to haul them to the end of track. Early in March twenty additional carloads of ties were brought up from Missouri for the Rock Island. "Wake up, day is dawning, and the bright sun of prosperity will soon be shining upon us in its fullest glory," exclaimed the *Bugle*, as the gap between ends of track narrowed.<sup>43</sup>

Just as in eastern Iowa, the growth of communities along the route from Des Moines to Council Bluffs illustrates the influence of the railroad as a town builder. In anticipation that a station would be established there, Atlantic, county seat of Cass County, was located about four months before the arrival of the railroad. The founder of the town, F. H. Whitney, owner of a considerable amount of land a few miles to the southwest, had tried in vain to have the railroad located through Lewis, but failing in that he succeeded in persuading the railroad to locate a station and lay out a town on his land to the north. Thus in September, 1868, the town of Atlantic was born. In that month the first residence was erected. During the winter, in spite of the fact that lumber had to be hauled in by team and wagon, fifty buildings were begun, some of them two-story structures. In February, after the railroad came, lands in the vicinity of the town sold at ten and fifteen dollars per acre; while from five to seven miles distant from the railroad lands were only five dollars an acre.<sup>44</sup>

The founding of Avoca offers another illustration of how stations along the line of railroad became focal points of settlement. "Four months ago," wrote a *Register* correspondent in August, 1869, "the site of this busy, thriving little town was but a portion of the broad prairie, without a settler, and covered only with a mantle of wild grass." Definite location of the railroad through a point naturally suited for a town invited settlement. Lumber for the first building was hauled the thirty-five miles from Council Bluffs in February or March, 1869. The railroad company erected a two-story passenger depot and eating house. Much of the land along the railroad right of way belonged to the railroad as part of its land grant. The

<sup>43</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Nov. 19, 1868; Feb. 11, 18, March 4, Apr. 25, 1869.

<sup>44</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Feb. 3, 1869.

company adhered to the general policy of selling to actual settlers, according to the *Bugle*.

A fine field is open at this point for those seeking a place to invest capital. In the immediate vicinity is plenty of unoccupied land for sale, as well adapted for farming or grazing purposes as can be found in the State — well watered and abundance of timber for needful purposes. . . . Lots are selling cheap, to those who will erect buildings immediately — the agent, Mr. [Ebenezer] Cook, having wisely adopted the system of selling only to those who contemplate occupying or building soon, and not for speculation.<sup>45</sup>

On May 10, 1869, news came that the golden spike had been driven that day at Promontory Point, Utah, the last link in the transcontinental railroad. Rock Island builders had hoped to complete their line to Council Bluffs in time to make the celebration a double one. As it was, the contractors laid the last rail just one day late, but nine months ahead of the deadline set by the Iowa legislature. Early completion was important — mail contracts and through freight might go to the Chicago & North Western. "This will be a consummation of things long devoutly wished for," said the *Bugle*, "and to our people particularly, will it be an event worthy of commemoration." On May 12, Council Bluffs held a double celebration — the cornerstone of the Ogden House was laid, and the first train arrived over the tracks of the Rock Island.<sup>46</sup>

In the first few months of through service to Council Bluffs the Rock Island won the approval of the traveling and shipping public. There was much favorable comment on the structure of the roadbed:

The curves are light, the steepest grade is a trifle over fifty feet to the mile, the embankments are unusually wide and solid, the bridges — and there are many of them — are substantial Howe truss structures, the rails are heavy, of good quality, most carefully laid and thickly tied, there has probably never been a new railroad in the West so solidly built.<sup>47</sup>

There was approval, too, of the fast schedules. The "fast Pacific express" made the run from Chicago to Council Bluffs in 18 hours, an average of 27½ miles per hour. "We were also pleased," said the *Bugle*, "with the

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 11, 1869; Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Jan. 27, 1870.

<sup>46</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, May 13, 1869; D. C. Bloomer, "Notes on the History of Pottawattamie County," *Annals of Iowa* (first series), 11:623-4 (October, 1873).

<sup>47</sup> *Western Railroad Gazette*, as quoted in the Council Bluffs *Bugle*, June 17, 1869.



genteel and affable manner in which the passengers were treated by the conductors and [others] connected with the road. Such a road and such managers are sure to win the esteem and patronage of the travelling and business public."<sup>48</sup> A good many years later, L. F. Andrews, a Des Moines resident, recalled that in the days when John F. Tracy headed the Rock Island, "the road came to be known as the 'Old Reliable' with business men and travelers everywhere."<sup>49</sup>

Features introduced on the Rock Island in the years 1868 and 1869 are illustrative of improvements in western roads during the period. Wood-burning locomotives were being converted to coal burners with the introduction of fireboxes which could burn soft coal. The transition was gradual. In June, 1869, when President Tracy made his report to stockholders, the Rock Island had 107 locomotives, 83 of which were coal burners. Eighteen were converted wood burners.<sup>50</sup>

Another significant improvement was the introduction of gas for use in lighting the cars. The candle light of the early days had been supplanted by coal oil lamp light, but neither was satisfactory. Said the *Bugle*: "arrangements have been made for supplying the passenger cars on the C., R. I. & P. R. R. with gas, thus giving the advantage of clear bright light during the night ride, instead of the dull light of a smoky coal oil lamp. This is an item for the traveling public."<sup>51</sup>

Improvements in rails came in the late sixties. The use of cast iron "chairs" in connecting ends of rails was abandoned with the introduction of "fish plates." By this device, rails were held together by plates fitted in the hollow of the rail on each side and bolted to the rail. This tended to eliminate the noisy clicking which accompanied travel on rails laid on chairs.<sup>52</sup>

At the end of the decade the Rock Island began to substitute steel for iron rails. Introduction of heavier rolling stock on all railroads focused attention on the unsatisfactory qualities of iron. Replacements were expen-

<sup>48</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Oct. 28, 1869.

<sup>49</sup> Des Moines *Register and Leader*, June 17, 1906.

<sup>50</sup> Advance report to stockholders, June, 1869, as published in the Des Moines *Register*, June 30, 1869.

<sup>51</sup> Des Moines *Register*, June 9, 1869; Council Bluffs *Bugle*, June 10, 1869.

<sup>52</sup> J. L. Ringwalt, *Development of Transportation Systems in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1888), 157-8.



sive, and operation hazardous. It was not until the late sixties, however, that steel rails manufactured by the Bessemer process were available for use in the United States.<sup>53</sup> In October, 1865, the Rock Island began experimenting with steel rails at the terminal in Chicago where they met a severe test from being pounded by locomotives and trains of the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana as well as by those of the Rock Island. The chief engineer was satisfied that the steel rails were more economical; consequently, the company in 1869 contracted for five hundred tons of the "John Brown Atlas toughened steel rails," as a beginning in replacement.<sup>54</sup>

The year 1869 also witnessed the placing in service of six new sleeping cars, the wonder and delight of people along the line, unused to such luxuries.<sup>55</sup> The Pullman car was already the model, but the Pullman Company had not yet attained a monopoly in manufacture. Diners were introduced at about the same time.<sup>56</sup>

By 1870, fifteen years after the introduction of transportation by rail, railroads were firmly entrenched in the Iowa economy. Symbolic of the change was the sale of the Western Stage Company properties. From settlement to settlement across Illinois and Iowa, the stage lines had shortened as the rails had lengthened. In the summer of 1870, at its headquarters in Des Moines, the Western Stage Company sold its horses at \$80 and \$90 a head, its two-horse coaches at \$50, and its four-horse coaches for \$100.<sup>57</sup> In the coming years the people might employ all sorts of invectives against rail transportation, but no stage company could again operate where railroads were available, nor could the slow wagon compete in the new economy.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 198-201.

<sup>54</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, Aug. 5, 1869.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 14, 1869, quoting the Davenport *Gazette*.

<sup>56</sup> Council Bluffs *Bugle*, June 3, 1869.

<sup>57</sup> Des Moines *Register*, July 27, 1870.

# THEY SAW THE EARLY MIDWEST: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF TRAVEL NARRATIVES, 1727-1850

By *Robert R. Hubach*

The following bibliography is the second in a series of three that list travel narratives, journals, and diaries, covering the period before 1850, published in Midwestern historical magazines. The first, "They Saw the Early Midwest: A Bibliography of Travel Narratives, 1722-1850," appeared in the Autumn, 1953, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, pp. 283-9. The present article is devoted to the trans-Mississippi Midwest: the states of Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, and South and North Dakota.

Although many of the books of early Middle Western travel are comparatively well known, the accounts given below were not printed until long after the events described in them had taken place and, consequently, were unfamiliar to readers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Since most of these narratives were not written by professional authors or intended for publication, they obviously lack the literary merits of books by people like Dickens, Irving, Marryat, and Mrs. Trollope. Nevertheless, here and there is a well-written account, an episode told so interestingly that even a skilled author could scarcely have done better. The opening of the Midwestern frontier is a colossal chapter in the epic of America, and these diaries and journals reflect the atmosphere and spirit of this region at that period of its development. Granted that many of these writers would have been more successful had they exerted more pains and used some literary skill, their narratives remain indispensable for a true and complete picture of the time and section of the country they depict.

The bibliography given below has been compiled from eighteen historical magazines of the trans-Mississippi Midwest:

*Missouri Historical Society Collections*  
*Glimpses of the Past* (St. Louis)  
*The Missouri Historical Review*  
*The Iowa Historical Record*

*Annals of Iowa*

*The Palimpsest* (Iowa City)

*Iowa Journal of History and Politics* (from 1949, *Iowa Journal of History*)

*Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*

*Minnesota History* (sometimes called *Minnesota History Bulletin*)

*Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society*

*The Kansas Historical Quarterly*

*Nebraska State Historical Society Transactions and Reports*

*Proceedings and Collections of Nebraska State Historical Society.*

*The Nebraska History Magazine*

*South Dakota Historical Collections*

*The South Dakota Historical Review*

*Collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota*

*North Dakota History*

*The North Dakota Historical Quarterly*

The issues included are those from the initial publication date to the present.

The compositions date from 1727, only five years later than do those of the Eastern Midwest; but a larger proportion of them are about the period from 1830 to 1850. As with the Eastern Midwest, the French, because they were the first to explore, were the first to describe the new lands. Numerous other nationalities — British, German, Dutch, and native American — were represented. River trips up the Missouri, Mississippi, Kaw, and Platte; exploring and hunting expeditions; and adventures and encounters with the Indians were the most common types of narratives. Although the travelers often endured almost unimaginable hardships, they were seldom adversely critical of the region's manners and mores as were the foreign novelists who bemoaned the lack of an American cultural heritage.

A study of the best of the accounts listed below would be valuable to a historian or to a writer of historical fiction. Since the authors of these narratives actually lived the incidents they described, they give a first-hand insight into the early Midwest such as no textbook can. The items have been arranged chronologically, and asterisks have been placed before those which are either well written or above the average in reader-appeal. Those covering more than one year have been grouped under the first date. Abbreviations in parentheses after the page numbers indicate the nationality of the author, the section of America of which he is a native, or an account of a particular type: Fr. = French; Br. = British; Ger. = German; Dut. = Dutch; EA = Eastern American; MWA = Midwestern Ameri-

can; and IC = Narrative of Indian Captivity. Letters have not been included unless they are distinctly narrative in form. If a work is a reprint, that fact and the publication from which it has been taken are given after it.

A forthcoming and concluding article in this series will list travel accounts in minor historical journals of the Eastern Midwest.

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DOCUMENT  
LETTERS FROM SHILOH  
*Edited by Mildred Throne*

Probably no war was so well reported in the newspapers of the nation as the Civil War. Only the large metropolitan papers could afford the luxury of a "war correspondent" at the front, but their reports were freely copied by the small newspapers throughout the country. These reports, however, were supplemented by letters from the men who did the fighting to their families or directly to the local editor. Naturally these letters give only fragments of the whole picture. Their importance lies in the personal accounts, the reactions expressed, and the actual picture of army life and fighting as seen by the citizen soldiers of the North and South. The drama, the horror, the excitement of a battle are better portrayed in these letters than in the more professional accounts of war correspondents or in the official reports of the officers. Hardly an issue of the local papers throughout Iowa appeared during the war years without at least one letter from some boy at the front, telling of his small part in great events. The following letters are a selection of the many written by the Iowa boys who fought in the Battle of Shiloh.

The battle fought at Pittsburg Landing in Tennessee on April 6 and 7, 1862, later came to be known as the Battle of Shiloh, the name being taken from the Shiloh church in the center of the battlefield.<sup>1</sup> It was the greatest and bloodiest battle that Iowa troops had fought in up to that time. Eleven of the state's regiments took part: the Second, Third, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth. Of these, the Second, Third, Seventh, Twelfth, and Fourteenth had fought

<sup>1</sup>For accounts of the Battle of Shiloh, see Kenneth P. Williams, *Lincoln Finds a General: A Military Study of the Civil War* (3 vols., New York, 1949-1952), 3:345-95; Stanley F. Horn, *The Army of Tennessee, A Military History* (Indianapolis, 1941), 122-43; Lloyd Lewis, *Sherman, Fighting Prophet* (New York, 1932), 219-31; *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (2 vols., New York, 1885), 1:330-70; *Memoirs of Gen. W. T. Sherman* . . . (2 vols., New York, 1891), 1:251-75; Adam Badeau, *Military History of Ulysses S. Grant* . . . (3 vols., New York, 1881), 1:57-98; *War of the Rebellion, A Compilation of the Official Records* . . . (Washington, 1884), Series I, Vol. X, Part I, *passim*. (Hereafter listed as *Official Records*.)

in the Battle of Fort Donelson on February 15, 1862, and thus could no longer be considered novices in the arts of war. The Third had also been at the Battle of Blue Mills in Missouri in 1861, while the Seventh had fought under Grant at Belmont, Missouri, in November of 1861. The balance of the regiments from Iowa were "greenhorns," having seen only minor service in Missouri. Nine of the eleven regiments had arrived at Pittsburg Landing during the week of March 16-23, had been assigned to the various commanders, and had set up camp in the area surrounding the Landing. The Sixteenth had arrived on April 4, while the Fifteenth reached Pittsburg on the morning of April 6. Without ever having fired the guns which they had received but a few days before, the Fifteenth and Sixteenth were thrown into one of the bloodiest battles of the war.<sup>2</sup>

The Army of the Tennessee which had gathered at the Landing under the command of Major General U. S. Grant was preparing to move against Corinth, Mississippi, some thirty miles away. Pittsburg Landing was merely that — a boat landing where steamboat passengers could disembark for Corinth. The site had been chosen by Brigadier General William T. Sherman as a likely place for a base for the gathering army,<sup>3</sup> and on the morning of the battle, five of the six Divisions were there. They were commanded by men whose names would soon be known throughout the North — the First, by Major General John A. McClernand; the Second, by Brigadier General W. H. L. Wallace, the highest ranking officer to die on the battlefield at Shiloh; the Fourth, by Brigadier General S. A. Hurlbut; the Fifth, by Brigadier General W. T. Sherman; and the Sixth, by Brigadier General B. M. Prentiss. The Third Division, commanded by Brigadier General Lew Wallace, was some ten miles away at Crump's Landing on the Tennessee.<sup>4</sup>

All in all, Grant had some 38,000 troops under his command on the morning of April 6, 1862. Of that number, almost 11,000 were casualties before the evening of April 7, and of this number, about 2,400 were Iowans.<sup>5</sup> The reason for the high ratio of Iowans in the casualty lists is that the Eighth, Twelfth, and Fourteenth regiments were captured, late in

<sup>2</sup> For the various regiments, see *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers . . .* (6 vols., Des Moines, 1908), Vols. 1 and 2, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Sherman, *Memoirs*, 1:255.

<sup>4</sup> *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 100-108.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 105, 112; S. H. M. Byers, *Iowa in War Times* (Des Moines, 1888), 145.

the afternoon of the first day of battle, in the bitter fighting in the "Hornet's Nest" under Prentiss, who himself became a prisoner of war along with his troops. Over 1,000 Iowans from these three regiments were listed as "missing or captured" after the battle.

Shiloh became one of the most controversial battles of the war. Was Grant caught napping? Many said so at the time, and military historians have, in the main, agreed. When the attack began about 6 o'clock on that Sunday morning in April, the Union troops were at breakfast or preparing for inspection. Grant was eating his breakfast at Savannah, several miles down the river from the Landing, and Major General Don Carlos Buell with his Army of the Ohio was making his leisurely way toward the encampment of the Army of the Tennessee. In spite of several brushes with Confederate pickets and cavalry on Friday and Saturday, Sherman and Prentiss, the two generals closest to the front, seemed blissfully unaware that Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston had moved some 40,000 troops within striking distance of the Army of the Tennessee. At the first sounds of the attack, Grant left at once for Pittsburg to take command of whatever was going on, but such was the force of the first Confederate assault that the Union troops were already reeling under the blows. Many of the green troops ran away and crowded the Landing, frantic with fear. Other troops, just as green, stood their ground and fought fiercely, giving way only when ordered or when their ammunition ran out. Officers, some as inexperienced as their men, rode back and forth, trying to rally their frightened regiments. Eighty-seven of the officers of the Army of the Tennessee were killed during the battle, and 336 were wounded; of these, 13 Iowa officers died and 48 were wounded.<sup>6</sup> Some regiments, with all their officers disabled, fled in panic for the safety of the Landing or attached themselves to other commands. All was confusion, and few of the men under the withering fire of the Confederate assaults saw Grant as he rode from post to post, organizing his defense, regrouping his divisions, rallying his officers to stand their ground.

Whatever the judgment of history on the battle, the men in the front lines, with almost one accord, blamed Grant for the surprise and the fearful slaughter, and gave him no credit for the victory. A few days after the battle a group from Iowa visited the troops. Justice W. E. Miller of Iowa City reported on the attitude of the men:

<sup>6</sup> *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 100-105.



Although our victory on Monday was complete and the rebels routed, yet it was too dearly purchased. The criminal carelessness, or something worse, on the part of Gen. Grant, whereby so many brave soldiers were slaughtered, admits of no palliation or excuse. Newspaper correspondents may write as they please, but the united voice of every soldier in Grant's army condemns him, and it is now time that the Government should do likewise. Belmont was bad, Donelson was worse, but Shiloh [sic] was the worst generalship of the war. Many officers told me that they were ready to exclaim, "O for night or Buell." Buell came, and our army as well as our country was saved.<sup>7</sup>

Dr. A. Ady of West Liberty also visited the Iowa troops shortly after the battle and wrote to the *Muscatine Journal* in a similar vein:

Nothing in the arrangements of the battle indicate that our army was within an easy day's march of a vast force bent on our destruction, and commanded by one of the ablest chieftains in the world. With such a record as this for the transactions of Sunday and the few preceding days, it is the sheerest folly to claim for the General in command on that day that he exhibited any of the characteristics of a prudent, still less, of a great commander. Nor can there be found one out of fifty of those who were engaged in the fearful carnage of the 6th of April to re-echo the servile praises showered by the newspaper press upon the great *Illinois General*. . . . Gen. Buell, and not Gen. Grant, is the real hero of Pittsburg Landing. It is owing to his timely arrival that the American people were spared the great sorrow of seeing their splendid Western army pass under the yoke of the conquering Beauregard. . . . His glory far surpasses that of Blucher [sic] at Waterloo; for while the one only brought a force of fresh troops, the other gave us, in addition, the vigor of an abler soldier where previously there was nothing but the imbecility of a pompous charlatan. The name of Grant really has no magic for the soldier.<sup>8</sup>

This opinion was echoed in letter after letter from the men who fought at "Shiloh, Bloody Shiloh."<sup>9</sup> The soldiers under Grant had learned, by bitter experience, that war was not glory and glamor; they had experienced the horrors and drudgery of modern warfare, with its frightful loss of life; and in their bewilderment, they blamed their commander. But when many in

<sup>7</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, Apr. 30, 1862.

<sup>8</sup> *Muscatine Journal*, May 2, 1862.

<sup>9</sup> Lewis, *Sherman*, 219-31.

Washington urged Lincoln to remove Grant, the President replied, possibly thinking of the fumbling, overcautious McClellan, "I can't spare this man. He fights."

When night came on the 6th, it was a defeated army that sought rest and shelter from the pouring rain. But Grant, who made his headquarters under a tree during the night, surveyed the situation and found it good. Night had come, and Buell had come, and even Lew Wallace — who had taken all day to find the battlefield — had come. Grant was "confident . . . that the next day would bring victory to our arms."<sup>10</sup>

And victory did come the next day. Reinforced by the fresh troops of Buell and Wallace, Grant's forces pushed the exhausted Confederates, who had no reinforcements to look forward to, from the field. Then it was that the men in the lines could sit down to begin writing their letters home, telling of their terrible and exciting experiences. The records of the generals and the officers have been preserved, but the records of the citizen soldiers in the line are scattered in old letters, cherished by their descendants, and in old newspapers, gathering dust on library shelves.

A collection of all the letters published in just Iowa newspapers alone would fill several volumes. The following are only a few of the many letters from the regiments that fought at Shiloh. Some express the drama of the two-day battle; some try to report whatever humor they could find, no doubt to relieve the worries at home; one, from a young drummer boy of the Iowa Sixth, is poignant in its very inarticulateness.

The letters have been arranged by Divisions, so that each group gives a slightly different picture of the battle as seen from several parts of the battlefield. When the Confederates under Johnston struck, Sherman's Fifth Division was on the right, centered around the log church known as Shiloh; to Sherman's left was Prentiss' Sixth Division; beyond Prentiss was the Second Brigade of Sherman's Division, under Colonel David Stuart. Back of Sherman was the First Division under McClernand; back of Prentiss was Hurlbut's Fourth Division. Still farther back, and closest to the river, was W. H. L. Wallace's Second Division. Lew Wallace's Third Division did not reach the battlefield until evening.<sup>11</sup>

To show, roughly, the progress of the fighting, and the part played in it

<sup>10</sup> Grant, *Memoirs*, 1:348-9.

<sup>11</sup> For maps of the progress of the fighting, see Williams, *Lincoln Finds a General*, 3:358, 373, 375, 387.

by the Iowa troops, the letters are arranged as follows: Sherman's Fifth (6th Iowa); Prentiss' Sixth (15th and 16th Iowa); McClelland's First (11th and 13th Iowa); Hurlbut's Fourth (3rd Iowa); and W. H. L. Wallace's Second (2nd, 7th, 8th, 12th, and 14th Iowa). Good letters from all the Iowa regiments have not been found, but enough have been included to give a picture of what Iowa soldiers experienced on April 6 and 7, 1862.

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#### FIFTH DIVISION (Brigadier General W. T. Sherman)

##### SIXTH IOWA

##### *Letter From a Drummer Boy in the Iowa Sixth to His Mother*

The following is the copy of a letter from William Harris,<sup>12</sup> drummer boy in the 6th Iowa, to his mother in this city:

Camp Shiloh, April 10, 1862.

Dear Mother:—I now sit down to tell you about the battle here. Mother it was a very hard one. The Rebels attacked us Sunday morning when we were eating our breakfasts. It was half-past seven when they came into our camp, and they made us retreat down to an open field, where our regiment made a stand and the 46th Ohio came up to help us. They fought us all day. Our Captain was killed by a cannon ball, which cut him in two.<sup>13</sup> The whole number of killed and wounded in our Company is, I think, 23. The rebels had a large force. We fought all day Sunday and all day Monday. Sunday night we were reinforced by Buel [sic], and then we were too strong for them.

They took me prisoner and put one man over me. I shot him and then run for my regiment. The bullets were thick after me but did not catch me.

I went over the battle field this morning and it is a hard looking place with dead men and dead horses. I helped to bury our Captain this morning. They [the Confederates] took his sword and pistol, and the very boots off his feet. They burnt our clothes and tore up everything about our camp. It is useless for me to tell you about this. The 6th Regiment fought well.

<sup>12</sup> *Roster and Record*, 1:845, lists a William H. Harris of Burlington, who enlisted in Company K at the age of eighteen, but does not mention that he was a "drummer boy."

<sup>13</sup> The Captain of Company K on April 6 was Richard E. White of Rome, Jefferson County, Iowa. He had been mustered in as a Second Lieutenant on July 12, 1861, at the age of thirty-one. On Oct. 19, 1861, he was promoted to Captain. He is buried at Shiloh National Cemetery, Lot 2, section B, grave 32. *Roster and Record*, 1:907.



The battle field is five miles square, and every step you make you step on dead horses, dead men or blood. This is the hardest battle which has been. It is a terrible place to look upon. They took my drum, but I did not care for that. I got a gun and went in for life or death.

This morning there were a great many arms and legs which had been cut from the wounded. It was a horrible sight, mother. They bury the dead fifty in a hole or trench. Tell the folks I am well and came through safe.<sup>14</sup>

*Further Particulars of the Pittsburg Battle*

We print this extract to show the stupidity and criminal carelessness of our commanding officers:<sup>15</sup>

Pittsburg Landing, Tenn.,  
Sunday, April 6, 1862.

At 3 o'clock on Friday one of the pickets of the 6th Regiment of Iowa Infantry was killed on post within 300 yards of this camp, whereupon a company of Cavalry supported with two or three companies of Infantry made a reconnaissance and discovered large bodies of Cavalry within two miles of our camp, pitching their tents. Another regiment of rebel cavalry were reconnoitering at the left, and blundered upon ten Companies of the 72d [Ohio] Regiment, who were at the time out for regimental drill. They opened on them and a lively little fight ensued, which only lasted for a few moments, but resulted in routing them with a loss of about 40, our loss being only 2 killed and 7 or 8 wounded.<sup>16</sup> All of the Regiments in our part of the camp formed up in line, and remained until evening. They were then

<sup>14</sup> Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, Apr. 21, 1862.

<sup>15</sup> This letter was written by the sutler with the 6th Iowa.

<sup>16</sup> This was one of several brushes with Confederate cavalry which occurred for several days before the battle. These encounters should have warned Grant and his commanders that something was brewing, but they all seemed convinced that the main body of the Confederates was still at Corinth. Sherman commented on this: "From about the 1st of April we were conscious that the rebel cavalry in our front was getting bolder and more saucy; and on Friday, the 4th of April, it dashed down and carried off one of our picket-guards, composed of an officer and seven men, posted a couple of miles out on the Corinth road. Colonel Buckland sent a company to its relief, then followed himself with a regiment, and, fearing lest he might be worsted, I called out his whole brigade [the Fourth] and followed some four or five miles, when the cavalry in advance encountered artillery. I then, after dark, drew back to our lines, and reported the fact by letter to General Grant, at Savannah; but thus far we had not positively detected the presence of infantry, for cavalry regiments generally had a couple of guns along, and I supposed the guns that opened on us on the evening of Friday, April 4th, belonged to the cavalry that was hovering along our whole front." Sherman, *Memoirs*, 1:257-8.



ordered into camp to be ready to march at a moment's warning. — Twice during the night the camp was thrown into commotion by the firing of pickets, which kept up a fight at intervals along our entire front line during the night, with occasionally a shell from the enemy, which was quickly answered by the artillery, which had been sent out to assist the 72d [Ohio]. In the morning a general attack was anticipated, but in that all were disappointed, as everything remained quiet through the day with the exception of a little picket fighting. All remained quiet until this morning — at about 8 o'clock we were completely surprised by at least 20,000 men entering our camp at our weakest point.<sup>17</sup> This, of course, threw our men into a sort of panic, and a portion of certain Regiments behaved most disgracefully, the men throwing [away] their guns, knapsacks, and every other article likely to be of any hindrance to them, and broke like deer for the levee, where they came near sinking two or three commissary boats before sufficient guards could be stationed to keep them off, some clinging to the guards of the boat, and many were drowned in attempting to swim to the boat. . . .

Wednesday, April 9th, 1862.

. . . Our regiment, the 6th, lost everything, among which was the subscriber's establishment containing \$5,000 worth of merchandise; my tents Gen. Beauregard made his headquarters (a mighty good place). I little thought of entertaining so important a personage. On their retreat all of our batteries lost in the fight the day previous were retaken together with a large amount of prisoners. . . .

They lost some of their best Generals, among whom was Gen'l Albert Sidney Johnson [sic], killed dead.<sup>18</sup> . . . The 6th Iowa suffered severely. Their average was 20 to the Company, in killed and wounded. They fought most nobly, and at times under the most discouraging circumstances. Their support were all young troops and were panic stricken at the onset. They were engaging five times their own number. . . . Col. McDowell [John Adair McDowell of Keokuk] was acting Brigadier, and behaved most nobly, always in the thickest of the fight. He commanded the 1st brigade, under

<sup>17</sup> Actually, Sherman was attacked by Confederate Major General W. J. Hardee, whose Third Division consisted of between 5,000 and 6,000 men. *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 398.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Sidney Johnston, the Confederate general in command at Shiloh, died about 2:30 in the afternoon of April 6th from a gunshot wound in the thigh which severed an artery. He bled to death before his physician could reach him. Beauregard then assumed command. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 134.

Gen. Sherman, on the extreme right wing. The flower of the Southern army were in the engagement. I think our General, Grant, underrated their strength, and did not prepare himself sufficiently. Their attack was a complete surprise to our whole army, causing a panic among all the young troops. The enemy entered our camps, so says prisoners, with between forty-five and fifty thousand men,<sup>19</sup> completely out-generalizing us, and the surprise was so great at first, that before a regiment or brigade could form in battle line, they would be completely overwhelmed by numbers and broken up. Our troops could not fight at first, and it was impossible for them to hold their ground. This would encourage the rebels, and on they came hooping [sic] and cheering. Their army was brigaded within three miles of our camp. . . .

The battle field was a heart rending scene, and in places the rebel dead were in piles, where our batteries played upon them the second day. . . .

L. M. BLAKELEY<sup>20</sup>

#### SIXTH DIVISION (Brigadier General B. M. Prentiss)

##### FIFTEENTH IOWA

##### *The Fifteenth at Shiloh*

The following extracts from a private letter from Lieutenant Studer,<sup>21</sup> of Company B, 15th Iowa, are valuable as showing the part taken by that Regiment in the battle of Shiloh:

Gen'l Hospital of the 6th Division  
in the Field Between Pittsburgh and Corinth  
May 15, 1862.

The 15th Regiment of Iowa Volunteers left St. Louis on the 1st of April, in the steamer Minnehaha, and after delaying at Cairo and Paducah for a considerable time, arrived at Pittsburgh [sic] Landing, early on Sunday morning, the 6th of April. I suppose it was about 7 o'clock in the morning, while eating our breakfast, when we could hear from a long distance the booming of cannon; which reminded us all that the bloody struggle had commenced. Soon after, I went into the stateroom, which I had the

<sup>19</sup> The Confederate forces actually totaled 40,000, *ibid.*, 124; *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 396.

<sup>20</sup> Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, Apr. 19, 1862.

<sup>21</sup> Adolphus G. Studer, of Des Moines, was of Swiss birth. He had enlisted in November, 1861, at the age of thirty. He was promoted to Captain May 24, 1862, and resigned the service Jan. 18, 1863. *Roster and Record*, 2:1016.

good fortune to share with our kind Major Belknap [William Worth Belknap of Keokuk], and got my trunk ready for the landing; and when the gentleman just mentioned came in, exclaiming: — "Lieutenant, get yourself and men ready; we are ordered out to fight in Gen. Prentiss' division! Take it cool! We will ship them!" I thought that was rather a queer introduction, on Sunday morning, on a stranger's premises, but I said nothing, more than just passing a few remarks to the Major, about the talents of Prentiss, as a Division General. He is a prisoner, now; and therefore I make use of the old Latin proverb, "*demortuis nil nise bene.*" I buckled on my sword, looked after my six shooter, went up on deck and ordered Company B, to "fall in"; had the roll called, and after that I announced to them the order I had just received. At the same time, I made a short speech to them, reminding them what they had enlisted for; besides that I gave them a few instructions necessary to be known by raw recruits. They answered "We will follow you, Lieutenant, and obey your commands!" I felt proud of them, I assure you. All the Companies were now ordered to form into line of battle on top of the hill or bluff overlooking the Landing.<sup>22</sup>

By that time the wounded were brought in thick and fast, being 8½ o'clock A. M. — Great numbers of stragglers had gathered about the Landing. . . . Officers, of all grades, rode and walked around, praying, cursing, and imploring the men to form again, and to start out again to fight. A good many obeyed, and some fell in with our Regiment. Ammunition was now issued to all our men, who all seemed sanguine to meet the enemy. This I considered as a good omen, for raw soldiers who had drawn their arms but ten days previously; considering the sight of all the wounded soldiers, the stragglers, and the general panic.

It was about 9½ o'clock when an Aid-de-Camp of Gen. McClelland rode up, ordering us to proceed out to his Division and to support Dresser's Battery, with the 16th Iowa Regiment, which had arrived with us. The command, "right face! Forward — march!" immediately followed. Forward we went, over hills, ravines, and through the timber; the 16th following in our wake. On our march, we begged stragglers standing on the way side, to fall in with us. Very few obeyed, and the balance walked away.

<sup>22</sup> For a graphic account of the part played by the 15th Iowa in the battle, see Mildred Throne (ed.), "The Civil War Diary of Cyrus F. Boyd, Fifteenth Iowa Infantry, 1861-1863," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 50:70-82 (January, 1952).



We met the Battery which we were ordered to support, on the road; announcing that they were out of ammunition. This looked rather awkward. The 16th Regiment, on a cross-road, left us, filing off to our right.

It is necessary to remark here that we were marching by the right flank in double files. We arrived now at an open, cleared field enclosed by timber. About half the regiment had entered the field, when the enemies artillery, hid on our left in the timber, greeted us with shells, grape and canister. — The grape and canister told on a few on the right wing. On we marched, and the regiment had just gained the field when we were greeted by a shower of musketry. This sudden cross fire was enough to make veterans careful. The sudden thought struck me that we were either outflanked or that our own troops were firing on us. The regiment got in disorder, threatening to break up in squads. We succeeded, after much difficulty, in reforming the line. Capt. [Wilson T.] Smith, and especially Lieut. [Christian E.] Lanstrum, assisted me very much. At the same time our gallant Major's cheering voice would be heard. The 16th regiment had arrived on the field in a shape that their right wing would come in with our extreme right at right angles. They kept low under cover of a fence. That was the last I saw of the 16th during our engagement, as they were drawn up in line afterwards on our (the 15th's) right, our company being on the extreme left. Then we marched by the front towards the timber. The enemy's skirmishers opened fire on us, and our regiment gave them a round which, according to their own telling, killed 40 men. We kept advancing through the timber down a gradually falling hill until we reached at the foot thereof a small creek nearly parallel with our front. — In front of us on a gently sloping hill, very thinly timbered, lay the enemy behind tents, which in their advance they had previously captured from our forces. They were thus almost hid from our view, the tents, logs and stumps affording them a good screen. Opposite our right wing they had a masked battery of 9 guns playing on us and the 16th, and at the same time they had a chance to rake the ground in our rear and on our right and left. We crossed the creek and a few steps beyond it we halted. I ordered our men to lie flat on the ground or to take advantage of any cover which the ground might afford. We had not one piece of artillery to support us, neither could I see any reserve forces in our rear, and our left was perfectly open, for I could not detect any forces on the prolongation of the line on our left, nor could I hear the report of arms in close proximity. I feared from the beginning, judging



from our position and the enemy's murderous fire, that unless supported by artillery our ground would prove untenable. We were at the mercy of the enemy's fire. The boys of Company B. advanced bravely. . . . Further to our right my observation did not go, as I was too busy watching the interests and progress of our own company. All I could see was that the whole line was there loading and firing with all their might, doing their duty faithfully, many of them advancing close to the enemy's position. I noticed some of our men that advanced within 20 steps of the enemy. Captain Smith stood up well on the right of his company, cautioning the men not to shoot unless they saw something to fire at. I ordered the men to gain ground by degrees, which they faithfully did. If any man should ever tell me that the 15th regiment did not do its duty, I should certainly make it a personal matter. Our Captain changed his place from the right to the left of the company, where [he] stood until we left the ground. . . .

A. G. STUDER<sup>23</sup>

#### SIXTEENTH IOWA

##### *From the 16th Iowa Regiment*

We received the following private letter last evening, and aware of the anxiety felt in regard to this Regiment, take the liberty of publishing it —  
Pittsburg, Tenn, April 7, 1862.

Brother Alfred: — The "bloody 16th" has availed itself at an early day of an opportunity for its first battle — and the greatest battle has just been fought, or is now fighting, that ever occurred on this Continent. — The forces engaged altogether amounted to perhaps 150,000 men,<sup>24</sup> although the newspapers will most likely give each side that number. The rebels had the advantage in numbers the first day, but at the close of that day reinforcements commenced arriving from Buell's army, conveyed across the river here by steamboats. But I can attempt no description of the great battle which, for some hours, raged fiercely at several far distant points at the same time. There are to-night *thousands* lying dead within a few miles of the place where I write, and some within a few yards.

<sup>23</sup> Des Moines Register, June 14, 1862.

<sup>24</sup> This is wrong. The Confederate forces totaled some 40,000. Grant reported on the Union forces as follows: "At Shiloh the effective strength of the Union forces on the morning of the 6th was 33,000. Lew Wallace brought 5,000 more after nightfall. . . . Excluding the troops who fled, panic-stricken, before they had fired a shot, there was not a time during the 6th when we had more than 25,000 men in line. On the 7th Buell brought 20,000 more." Grant, *Memoirs*, 1:366.

The battle at Fort Donelson was a mere trifle in comparison with this, as I have been informed by two Generals who were at both places. In fact, there were more killed the first day here than all the time there — yet to-day, [with] both sides largely reinforced<sup>25</sup> the battle raged still more fiercely than yesterday. The rebels gained a decided advantage yesterday, penetrating into our camp, destroying many tents, capturing a large number of prisoners, and seriously threatening the destruction or capture of our army. They fought bravely and had a much larger number in the field than we had. The attack was sudden and able, Beauregard being their General, and for a time everything looked threatening. It was their last great desperate effort seemingly, and desperately fought out to the bitter end. This evening the rebel army is miles away, our army in pursuit, and our danger over — but the loss on both sides fearful. How far our Iowa regiments have suffered, and how many of their well known officers have been killed or captured, cannot now be told. There is every reason to believe the 12th and 14th regiments have been captured — others have lost severely in killed and wounded. . . .

But I must tell you something of the 16th. We arrived here Friday night last, after a pleasant trip. It was, of course, very muddy. We had to make a road up a steep bluff to get out our wagons, mules, goods &c. — We were ordered to join Gen. Prentiss' division, next to the advance line, nearly four miles out, and one of the first afterwards attacked by the enemy. We nearly succeeded in getting out there Saturday night. Had we done so, we would have lost all our property, and perhaps all our regiment. The move, however, was fortunately delayed till Sunday morning. We then had everything ready to start, when the booming of cannon and volleys of musketry announced a battle. The 15th and 16th formed on the bluff, distributed ammunition, and by ten o'clock were on the march to battle — raw troops, only partially drilled, and utterly unpracticed in the use of arms. We ought never to have been put in the field under such circumstances — more especially in a battle between . . . ourselves and experienced troops with a battery of sharp-shooters. We marched out several miles — then a General, *who*, I don't know, ordered us across an open field.<sup>26</sup> . . .

<sup>25</sup> The writer is in error here. The Confederate forces were not reinforced on Monday.

<sup>26</sup> Such was the confusion during the battle that, although the 15th and 16th were assigned to Prentiss' Sixth Division, they actually fought in support of McClernand's

Our boys stood it very well for new soldiers, although bombshells burst over their heads, and several arms and legs were knocked off by cannon balls. We finally got them in what was designed as our "position" — in an open space, near a battery, with their sharpshooters protected by large trees in open woods. It promised to be a clear case of butchery. The men laid down flat, half rising to fire. They did all they could, and held the position longer than more experienced troops probably *would* have held it. The regiments retired, but not in hurried confusion, when an attack was being made by a large body of troops in front and flank. Col. [Alexander] Chambers received a ball through his right arm, but only a flesh wound. Another ball shockingly tore his coat, struck the saddle, went into his coat pocket, tore several holes in his handkerchief, and the ball was found in his pocket. I lost both my horses, Bally and Lettie, and my Wentz, saddle and bridle — so now I am on foot, but expecting hourly to confiscate a horse. Adj. [George E.] McCosh rode Bally by special favor. The horse had his leg shattered and was led off, but I suppose never got far. My Wentz mare received three balls before she fell, the last when I was trying to rally the 16th for a stand. Before I arose the regiments were off the ground, and as I walked off, the bullets whistling around thick, I was the last man alive or unwounded on the ground. Dozens of regiments were broken into fragments during the day, and men [are] looking everywhere for their companies.

I rallied a portion of the regiment on our return, and led them out again. This time we were called with others, to protect a battery, or series of them. Our men laid three hours under rushing cannon balls and bomb shells — nearly all fortunately aimed too high. These batteries of ours probably stemmed the rebel tide of victory for that day, and kept them from planting a battery which would have been terribly destructive. From that position we were marched to the advance line, and there remained all night. — From 7 A. M. to 11 P. M. I was in the saddle, excepting an hour, when I had no horse to ride — had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours — sat up all

First Division. Colonel Alexander Chambers of the 16th Iowa reported: ". . . on Sunday morning, April 6, while my regiment was preparing to join General Prentiss' division, as was previously ordered, an aide of General Grant ordered my regiment in line on the right of the Fifteenth Iowa Volunteers, to act as a reserve and prevent stragglers from reaching the river. The line had been formed but a short time when I was ordered to march it, following the Fifteenth Iowa, to General McClelland's division, whose right was giving way." *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 286.



night, the rain literally *pouring* down at intervals. I call that a pretty rough beginning anyhow. To day we were left to protect a battery, only needed in case of a reverse, and were not, therefore, in the fight. . . .

But I must close. We have not had an opportunity yet of pitching our tents or getting our baggage, and we will sleep in the rain and mud to-night, uncovered except by our blankets, a *single* one each, and no overcoats, as they have been laid aside for fighting. We sleep just where we happen to be at night — and may be called on to march at any day on the track of the flying but still hard fighting enemy. It is now late at night, and I have had nothing to eat since breakfast, and that breakfast was a hard cracker, a piece of fat bacon, and coffee made out of coffee grains boiled whole. No chance of supper, although the boys have had theirs. — But I rather like this life. It is *novel* anyhow, to me. . . .

ADD. H. SANDERS<sup>27</sup>

FIRST DIVISION (Major General John A. McClernand)

ELEVENTH IOWA

*Letter From the 11th Regiment*

Near Pittsburgh Landing, Tenn.,

April 28, 1862.

*Editors Republican:* "The great battle on the Tennessee" must still form the theme of any letter from this locality. You have already had many histories and descriptions of it, and mine will probably seem stale and toady. I therefore only propose to give a sketch of the part taken by the Iowa Eleventh in the action.

The 11th numbered, on the morning of the battle, 750, officers and men. Col. [Abraham M.] Hare, in the absence of Gen. Oglesby, being in command of our Brigade — the first in McClernand's Division — the command of the regiment fell to Lieut. Col. [William] Hall. Col. Hall, though a rigid disciplinarian [*sic*], is an exceedingly-kind-hearted man—being considerate

<sup>27</sup> Des Moines Register, Apr. 20, 1862, copied from the Davenport Gazette. Addison H. Sanders of Davenport was mustered in as Lieutenant Colonel of the 16th on Nov. 14, 1861, at the age of thirty-eight. He was wounded in the Battle of Corinth, and taken prisoner at Atlanta. He was brevetted a brigadier general March 13, 1865. Roster and Record, 2:1071. After the war Sanders became postmaster at Davenport, and in 1870 was appointed by President Grant as Secretary of Montana Territory, then as acting governor of the territory, and later as Register of the United States Land Office there. Later he returned to Davenport and did editorial work on several newspapers there. Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . . (4 vols., New York, 1903), 4:230-31.



of the sick — and as gallant a cavalier as ever strode a steed. You may, therefore, well suppose the regiment was eager to follow him to the field. Col. H. followed, at home, I believe, the profession of the law, but when he entered the army he laid aside the arts of the special pleader. The regiment was therefore spared the agony of a military harrangue [sic] before the battle. Military stump speeches have sometimes a palatable flavor when subjected to the decomposing process of age and enhanced by the labels of the press, but they are excessively mawkish when fresh drawn.

The first intimation our regiment had of the commencement of the battle, was a report of musketry on our left, followed by the roar of cannon. Then came a cannon ball from a rifled muzzle, which seemed to say, "*Ladies and gentlemen, I am none of your smooth bores; let us bring the matter in dispute to a point.*" When I represent the cannon balls as holding sweet converse with *ladies* I mean it, for we had no less than two of these angelic visitors in our camp at the time. One of them was the wife of Col. Hall, who had accompanied her husband to the camp, and who probably can lay as good claims to being a participant in a battle as the famous Joan of Arc.

The regiment soon took up a position about a quarter of a mile to the left of their camp. It is now conceded on all hands that they held their position longer, made more bayonet charges, and disputed the ground more bull-dog-ishly, than any other regiment on the field. Twelve men from the 11th consolidated the fragments from several artillery companies, consisting of three pieces of cannon, and for eight hours illustrated the glory of American arms by pouring the hot shot into the enemy's ranks. Gen. McClernand seemed to depend more on the 11th than on any regiment in his Division, for he was seen with it more than with any corps of his army — delivering his orders in person to Col. Hall. The most brilliant feat [sic] performed by the 11th was the capture of a rebel flag. Col. Hall's horse having fallen under him, the pugnacious little hero gathered himself up, and waving his hat upon the point of his sword, ordered his men to charge bayonets, which they did in gallant style, plowing their way through or driving the enemy before them. . . . The history of the part taken by our regiment on the memorable 6th of April, may be summed up in a few words. It was a series of alternate charges and repulses, desperate sallies and sullen retrograde movements — gaining each time a little ground, till ammunition became exhausted [sic]. Only think of a regiment in a desperate

hand-to-hand struggle, having to go three miles to replenish their ammunition! In extenuation for any negligence which may be laid to the charge of those whose duty it was to have guarded against this, it may be said that the 11th had already expended eighty rounds which is about twice as much as is generally used by men even in a full day's fighting. The regiment having gone to the river for ammunition and procured it, returned to the battle-field on the double-quick, and renewed their acquaintance with the secesh, much to the disgust, no doubt, of the latter, for it was about this time in the afternoon, four o'clock, that the tide of battle was turned and victory assured. The rebels occupied on Sunday night, among others, the tents of the 11th, but they must have found them beds of thorns, for the gun-boats, Lexington and Tylor [*Tyler*], sent out among them, every few minutes, a pleasing invitation to wake up. The enemy got very little booty from the 11th, for thanks to the thoughtfulness of Col. Hall, the sick and baggage of the regiment were put on wagons when the battle first began, and when a retrograde movement became inevitably necessary, they were ready to move. But as a specimen of the moral status of the rebels, I may say that the Surgeon of the 13th Iowa, in the same Brigade with us, who left a barrel of medical whiskey standing in his tent, had it all sucked dry — they not even leaving enough for bitters for the hospital corps the next morning. I have dwelt upon this illustrative incident of the battle, because reading Beauregard's dispatch, thanking Almighty God, I expected more piety on the part of his army, and knowing his French pro-generation, I had expected more politeness from those under his command. I am happy to be able to add that the 13th have procured another barrel, and that the Surgeon is doing well. It was astonishing, by the way, to see the effect of grape shot on some of the rheumatic cases in our camp. There were some laboring under this volatile disease, who declared that nothing less than an ambulance could take them to the river. Having secured seats in these, and the whole stock and generation of teams becoming stuck together in the road, these same gentlemen, under the influence of canister and shell, would leave the ambulance, and pronouncing another mass on the sons of female dogs, who thus rudely interposed between them and comfort, and take to their heels. These were probably the same gentlemen who crowded to the bank of the river to welcome Buell's army with cheers and tried to swim to the hospital boats, to prevent their steaming off in a cowardly manner before the battle was fully assured. . . .

I could not help thinking last night, as I walked through the camp, what money many would gladly spend to be able to witness the magnificent view our encampment presented, and this morning when the reveille from fifty bands and ten thousand feathered throats woke the dawn, I inwardly exclaimed, "It is good to be here." . . . The reveille is truly beautiful, but occurs rather early in the morning for fashionable men.

Yours, in camp,

ONE OF MANY.<sup>28</sup>

### *The Battle at Pittsburg Landing*

The following interesting detailed account of the battle of Pittsburg Landing is given by Serg't H. M. White,<sup>29</sup> of Co. H, 11th Regiment, in a private letter to C. Elliott, Esq., of West Liberty. It is the most minute narrative of the experience of our Muscatine boys in the fight that we have yet published:

Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., April 16th

My Dear Friend: I dare say you are at this moment better posted in regard to the "great battle of Pittsburg Landing" than your humble servant, who had the good fortune to be here at and during the fight. Nevertheless, I am certain you will not be content until you receive a full, true and particular account from your own correspondent — so here goes.

In the first place, endeavor to fix in your mind the location of a few prominent points.

Pittsburg Landing (a simple landing place, with no houses) stands on the west bank of the Tennessee river, some ten miles south of Savannah. From the Landing, a road leaves the river, and, running at an angle of some 45° from the river for the distance of three miles, reaches the camping ground of our brigade (the 8th and 18th Illinois, and the 11th and 13th Iowa). Thus, you see, we are at the southwest of Pittsburg, while, some twenty miles to the southwest of us, lies Corinth, the crossing of the Memphis and Charleston and Mobile and Ohio railroads. South of us, and between here and Corinth, is an extensive swamp, which, starting from the river, extends

<sup>28</sup> Iowa City *Republican*, May 14, 1862.

<sup>29</sup> Harold M. White of West Liberty was mustered in as third sergeant of Co. H, 11th Iowa, on Oct. 18, 1861. He was promoted to first sergeant on May 12, 1862, but died of chronic diarrhea in December, 1862. *Roster and Record*, 2:401; *Report of Brig.-Gen. Nathaniel E. Baker, Adjutant General [Iowa]* . . . Jan. 1, 1867 (2 vols., Des Moines, 1867), 1:642.



several miles to the west. Through this swamp, with a view of transporting our heavy artillery and baggage, our Generals had constructed a causeway, but, unfortunately, we never had an opportunity of traveling on our new and elegant road.

As Mohomet [sic], in despair of the mountain coming to him, condescended to make the mountain a visit, so our friend Beauregard — the hero of Sumter and Manassas — concluded that we were not at all anxious to enjoy the entertainment of "Southern powder and Southern steel" prepared for us, made up his mind to come and partake of our simple Northern cheer. And so he came, bringing, as I am told, part of his army over our newly constructed road, without even going through the formality of paying toll. He evidently intended remaining through the day, as he came before breakfast. Before he reached our camp, however, the morning meal was over, and we were preparing for inspection. But the sounding of the "long roll" through the camp told us that sterner work was at hand.

The regiment was formed, and, after remaining standing for a short time in the field where our camp was located, we marched into a piece of timbered land to the south of us. Through this we advanced perhaps half a mile, to a sort of clearing, an occasional cannon ball passing over our heads, indicating the nature of the day's work before us. — Reaching this clearing, we were ordered to lie down, and presently the firing commenced, and the contending parties were speedily engaged. The regiment that was advancing against us, was evidently an A, No. 1. One look at them was enough to convince a man that courage and discipline are virtues peculiar to neither North or South. Without a waver the long line of glittering steel moved steadily forward, while, over all, the silken folds of the Confederate flag floated gracefully on the morning air. What regiment this was, I have not been able to ascertain positively. At first I was told that it was the 8th Mississippi, but since then one of the prisoners has told me that it was the Crescent City Guard, from New Orleans. At all events, it was a superb one, and we speedily had the most convincing proof that it was good for something else besides to look at. At their left, and slightly in advance, was another regiment, of which I did not take so much notice. Both of these regiments did their best against us, while we were assisted by a section (2 pieces) of artillery.

After about half an hour of good work, we were ordered back. At this point, I judge that we must have suffered more than during any other part



of the day. . . . The order at length came to fall back, which was done in good order. And, by the way, I must say that the regiment (I have not as yet learned who they were) that was in the fight before us, is not entitled to this praise. They came running back in the wildest disorder. One frightened fugitive in particular I noticed, who, as he came along and ran through our ranks, exclaimed, "Give them h—ll, boys. I gave them h—ll as long as I could." Whether he had really given them any of the *sulphurous* or not, I can not say, but assuredly he had given them everything else he possessed, including his gun, cartridge-box, coat and hat, and was in a fair way to leave his unmentionables and under garments, to be accounted for perhaps by the return so commonly made — "lost in action."

But to return. Our regiment was ordered to fall back, which we did in good style, and at the distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile our line of battle was re-formed in a very creditable manner. Being so drawn up, a second time we advanced, halting at first on the brow of a slight elevation, firing and by slow degrees advancing. This time most of the boys fired while standing. The line was also much more extended than at first — there being a regiment on our left and one, I believe, on our right. The enemy occupied about the same ground that we did at the time of the first attack by us — that is, they were firing from the same spot where we were lying about half an hour before. This time, I should say, we remained some three-quarters of an hour, and again fell back into the timber. Our ranks re-formed and a third advance was made. This time we remained perhaps half an hour, when our cartridges having given out, it was directed that we go to the river for more ammunition.

This was for all practical purposes all the fighting done by our regiment during the day. How severe it was may be inferred from the fact that our regiment, numbering I think not more than six hundred men, lost about one hundred and eighty in killed and wounded.<sup>30</sup> The Colonel was shot in the hand, the Lieut. Colonel in the ankle and the Major in the head. Both our regimental and company officers have shown themselves possessed of an abundance of pluck, and capacity for command.

There were some scenes positively ludicrous, although it was such a serious time. Some of our men were given to firing from some distance to

<sup>30</sup> The official report of losses of the 11th Iowa was one officer and 32 enlisted men killed; 5 officers and 155 enlisted men wounded; and 1 enlisted man captured or missing, for a total of 194. *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 100.

the rear without thinking sufficiently who were in front, and in some instances wounded our own men, who were too far in advance of the regiment. One of these, with a view to protect himself from what he regarded the most dangerous fire, took position in front of a tree, having nothing between himself and the enemy, but a most excellent defense against the injudicious attacks of his own friends.

One little fellow in our company was wounded in the head at the time of our first advance, and while I poured water from my canteen on his wound, he gave me an account of the manner in which it was received, garnished with such an abundance of oaths that it would have made a sad inroad upon his pay, had the pecuniary penalties imposed by the third article of war upon "any non-commissioned officer or soldier who shall use any profane oath or execration," been strictly enforced.

One of our greatest misfortunes was the want of suitable cartridges. The powder used in them was of such a poor quality that after firing the first few shots, the guns were so dirty that it was almost impossible to load them, the bullet being forced down with the greatest difficulty. — Why such powder was used can only be explained on the supposition that poor powder costs less than good, and by using it somebody's friend, in the shape of an army contractor, made a "big thing" which might have been considerably reduced by the use of the proper article.

Our march to the river was not a very regular affair, as each man got there as best he could and by his own route; nevertheless we all, or nearly all of us who were unhurt, reached it. . . . I came up on the bluffs when the regiment was forming and where several boxes of cartridges had been provided for the use of our regiment. Again we started back for the scene of action, but were ordered to take a position in front of one of our batteries, which was situated about a half a mile back from the Landing and which at the time had not commenced firing. We remained there for a short time only, when we were directed to take another position half a mile in advance, where we remained nearly an hour. The enemy in the meantime were approaching us gradually but surely. The rattle of musketry during the whole day had been unceasing and at two or three o'clock it seemed to be increasing in fierceness and intensity. Our lines were assuredly giving way before the steady and vigorous attack of the rebel army, and while the masterly genius who directed their movements had infused his own spirit into their ranks, on our side something was lacking.

The work assigned to us during the afternoon was exceedingly light. The order now came to fall back behind the battery. Other regiments had already passed us and taken their places there. The battery then opened. It was comprised of a good many pieces, among them which my attention was principally attracted by a couple of monster guns, said to be one 84 and the other a 64-pounder. — They belched forth their iron hail upon the advancing enemy, — and should these fail, the word came from an old staff officer, our last and only resource was the bayonet. We were not forced to this dire alternative, however. The artillery proved to be very effective. . . .

Just before sunset, as our regiment — now fearfully reduced from killed, wounded and exhaustion, was standing in its place, a fresh regiment of Buell's command made its appearance and relieved us. Capt. [William] Grant of Co. A, who had been in command the after part of the day, directed us to a place of rendezvous, which was near an old house, in which but a few hours before a sutler was doing a thriving business. But commerce, you know, is proverbially timid, and trade does not flourish amid the rude clangor of arms. So the sutler finding that it was unpleasant to transact business while cannon balls were flying through the roof of his establishment, had prudently abandoned it to its fate and taken care of himself. The judicial decision which pronounces pirates on the seas enemies of ships of any nation, is paralleled by another decision — if not of the military courts, at least of most members of the profession, to the effect that sutlers are foes to the human, or at least the soldier race, and their goods therefore lawful subjects of capture. I assure you the theory was acted upon promptly that night. A barrel of excellent crackers was the first to suffer, in the general scramble for the sutler's estate, of which I was so fortunate as to receive as many as my two hands would hold. With these and a chunk of cheese of most prodigious strength I made a most excellent supper, after which a transient acquaintance of mine from Company I gave me a large paper of excellent smoking tobacco, which I feel confident he never obtained by any legitimate purchase. I sat down, and filling my pipe, commenced musing over the affairs of the day, and you may well suppose my musings were not of a very agreeable character. The prospect was most decidedly *blue* — not the bright, cerulean tints of the summer sky, but a dark, despairing, deplorable blue.

That we were whipped was certain. That on the morrow we should all be taken prisoners was more than probable. Nothing but the appearance of



Buell could save us from utter destruction. Fortunately, Buell was near at hand and all the night long we could hear the constant splashing of the steamboat wheels as regiment after regiment was brought over the stream. During the night, as if nature was disposed to add to the general gloom, a furious storm came on, which continued for several hours.

The gun-boats which had somehow obtained an idea of the position of the enemy kept up a pretty regular fire during the night. — The roar of that firing was appalling, and the next day we learned that the effects of it had been destructive in the extreme. In the morning the enemy, acting on the maxim that "the early bird catches the worm," commenced operations bright and early. But during the whole day the tide of success rolled the other way. Not only had the forces of Buell crossed the river, but Buell was with them, and it is no more than the truth to say that his personal presence was worth more than his whole army. To-day we had generalship; yesterday chance seemed to rule the hour. The change was miraculous. Regiments the day before had gone into battle with no idea of what they were to do; without support and with no provision for following up their success, or recovering what they had lost. To-day it was different, and for the first time we could perceive the difference between a scientific soldier, for such Buell assuredly is, and an imbecile character, which term describes somebody else.

Towards night, when it became evident that the enemy was in full retreat, we were near our old camp and concluded to stop there for the night, so turning the head of the regiment in that direction we came in about half an hour to the pleasant spot which some six and thirty hours before we had left under peculiar circumstances. Our home looked decidedly the worse for wear. In our principal avenue nearly in front of the Captain's tent lay a dead horse. The tents were considerably torn by balls. In our tent was a six-pound ball which had torn quite a hole in the side of the edifice; two canister shot had also passed through it and left their marks behind them. When I saw these evidences of what had been the character of our visitors, I could not help entertaining the inhospitable thought that I was glad I was not at home when they called. Our knapsacks had all been broken into. Our blankets were all taken. From my knapsack they had pilfered a pair of sky-blue pantaloons, which were my especial pride and joy, and in which I had been wont to array myself when preparing for any great occasion. The marauding vagabonds had carried off my Bible also; for what purpose



I can't conceive, unless to have the ten commandments and more especially the one which says "thou shalt not steal," hard by to refer to in case of need. I fared no worse than my neighbors, however. Each man lost something, and the Texan Rangers, who are generally supposed to have perpetrated the theft, are in consequence by no means popular.

Since then we have remained here and are in daily expectation of moving forward or being attacked, but neither event has as yet happened. Perhaps I have been too jocose in giving a description of the fight as I saw it, but God knows I feel sad enough as often as I think of the dear friends who were stricken down to rise no more, and those who are lingering in pain and suffering. . . .

H. M. W.<sup>31</sup>

FOURTH DIVISION (Brigadier General S. A. Hurlbut)

THIRD IOWA

*An Iowan at Shiloh*

Ed. Register: — For the benefit of history I forward to you for publication, a statement of what my son<sup>32</sup> saw and experienced at the battle of Pittsburg Landing. If it shall enable any future historian to cull from the vast mass of incidents that occurred on that day, any facts unrecorded, my only object will have been accomplished.

Very respectfully &c.,

GEO. M. SWAN

Norwalk, Warren co., Iowa, June 5, 1862.

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It had been rumored several days previous to the battle, that the rebels intended to drive us out of Tennessee, but the rumor was discredited — considered a "camp report." On Friday, about 5 p. m. a skirmish took place between a large body of rebels, and a part of Gen. Prentiss' command, at the out-posts. — The long roll was beaten, and in a few minutes our whole brigade, (Gen. Hurlbut's), was on the road, "double quick," to participate in the fight; but when we reached the scene of action — it being some four miles from our camp — the fight was over. Our loss was two

<sup>31</sup> Muscatine *Journal*, May 2, 1862.

<sup>32</sup> William Swan of Norwalk enlisted in Co. G, 3rd Iowa, on May 21, 1861. He was wounded slightly at Blue Mills, Mo., in September, 1861; promoted Second Corporal, Feb. 1, 1862; again wounded at Shiloh; and discharged for disability Aug. 21, 1862. *Roster and Record*, 1:382.

killed and three or four wounded. We took thirty prisoners, and the rebels left ten of their dead on the ground. Among the prisoners was a rebel Lieutenant, who was mortally wounded; he was brought into camp and a few minutes before he died, he said: "I regret very much that I am among the first to fall in the great coming struggle, but my footsteps will be followed by thousands, before many days." These words, uttered by a dying man, ought to have put Gen. Grant upon his guard, and thus saved many brave soldiers, whose lives were sacrificed on the following Sunday. On Sunday about six a. m., while eating, heavy cannonading and musketry were heard in the direction of the outposts, which were about three miles from our camp. The firing was heard by us with interest, for a few minutes, but it was regarded merely as a skirmish. Our imaginings were, however, soon cut short by the sound of the "long roll," and with it came the welcome command, "Fall in — lively, boys"; and very soon every one had his cartridge box on, and, musket in hand, was soon in rank, and in another moment we were on the road at "double quick," to meet the enemy.

About a quarter of a mile beyond our camp, we found the road and woods literally swarming with soldiers of Prentiss's Division, who were retreating from the outposts. As we were passing them, going on "double quick" to meet the enemy, some of our boys asked them why they were running away? They replied: "Don't go out there — they will *give you hell!* We are all cut to pieces." Our reply was, "Out there we are going, and if the rebels have any *hell*, we intend to go through it!" and on we went, not stopping. A short distance further on, we met a Government wagon, in which were some rebel prisoners, which I supposed had been captured in the fight. As we passed them they commenced cursing our Regiment, calling us "damned Yankees," and swearing that they would give us enough of "Dixie's land" before that day's work was over. I never felt more like shooting a rebel.

We were still about two miles from the battle-field, and, on the full run, to reach the scene — all in high spirits, and eager to get into the fight. We soon reached the ground, and barely had time to form our brigade in line of battle, and get a battery in position, before we were greeted with a storm of shot, shell, grape, and canister which literally mowed down the brush and huge oak trees, carrying with it death and destruction — but our boys met the terrible shock without flinching — every man at his post — and with shouts which sounded above the roar of the artillery, they returned

the volley, and the engagement became general. The earth trembled as we fired volley after volley, well directed, into the rebel ranks, which mowed them down like grass before the scythe. Here the horse of our own gallant Colonel Williams was shot by a cannon ball, which passed through him behind the saddle, and through the saddle skirts. The sudden fall of the horse caught our brave Colonel under him, and injured him so severely that he was carried off the field, supposed to be in a dying condition.

The command then devolved upon Major Wm. M. Stone — than whom a braver man never lived. We were charged upon by a rebel Regiment, believed to have been the New Orleans City Guards — who tried to take our Battery, and who charged across an open field. Our Regiment about 700 strong at the time, was stationed behind a rail fence, which afforded us some protection. Major Stone commanded us to lie down, and as he rode along the lines, said, "boys, lay low — don't fire a gun, until you can see the whites of their eyes — then rise and give 'em ——!" On they came, confident they could take our battery. At the command, with a shout which could be heard above the roar of the battle, we poured a well-directed fire into them — they wavered, and then fled in confusion — the ground was strewn with dead and wounded rebels. They retreated to the woods on the opposite side of the field, and again formed into line. We were ordered to lie down, and await another charge of the rebels — on they came, at a charge of bayonets, on "double quick" and when they were within about a hundred yards of us, we arose and poured volley after volley into them. — They delivered their fire at us, killing many of our brave boys, but those who survived our fire, fled. Of the whole rebel Regiment, I do not believe more than 200 escaped unharmed. The rebels now seemed to throw their whole force against the right wing, but being foiled, they appeared to engage the whole line, for, to our right and left, we could hear brisk firing. Again commenced the fearful struggle — our boys fighting like heroes, some falling on every side, but like *men* who never knew defeat, or how to *retreat*. — At times the rebels seemed to direct their whole fire at our noble flag, which was pierced with many bullets, and our noble little color guard were falling. Corporal Farber, of Company D, had his right arm shot off by a large piece of shell, which exploded near the flag. He was standing by my side, doing his duty like a true soldier. — As he was carried away he said with emphasis, "*Boys, take care of our flag, I am sorry to leave you.*" Corporal Tracy, of Company A, fell with his left arm badly shattered, and



now the scene can scarcely be described — it was terrific. The whole earth seemed in a blaze — the sharp, ringing crack of our muskets — our batteries belching forth their shot and shell, and roaring like a deep toned thunder — the enemy's cannon balls screeching above our heads, and ploughing through our ranks, tearing up the earth before and behind us — large oak trees being splintered as if by lightning — limbs of trees falling, and twelve pound and twenty-four pound cannon balls — and still our brave men held their ground, like heroes, who were determined to conquer or die. Our gallant Major, Stone, was every where cheering the men, and was heard to exclaim "My God! what are my men made of — they must have hearts of steel!" We withstood the assaults of the rebels, at times driving them, and then being driven, until about half past three p. m., when General Hurlbut ordered the line to retire slowly, as the rebels had turned our left wing, which rested upon the bank of the river; and slowly, step by step, did our whole brigade dispute the ground. After retreating in this manner for about a quarter of a mile, we formed again in line, about three-quarters of a mile from our Regimental camping ground, and now the conflict raged, if possible more fiercely than ever — our men falling rapidly, and we in turn dealing death and destruction to the rebels, and beating them back at each and every furious onset — the rebels bringing up fresh Regiments as fast as we would thin their ranks, and thus relieving their own men, while our troops had fought them all day without rest — and thus they were able to bring fresh troops against us, yet our men stood firmly to their work — every discharge telling with terrible effect upon the enemy — not daunted in the least, still fighting as men only can fight in the cause of the Union — the bullets flying thick and fast — only two of our color-guard remaining, the Color Sergeant still unharmed, bearing aloft our flag. About five p. m., as I was in the act of firing my musket, I received a Minnie ball through my left foot, the shock from which stunned my whole frame, and benumbed my leg and foot — in fact, I came near falling — and then came the deathly sickness which always follows a gunshot wound. Having partially recovered from the first sensation of sickness, I determined to give the rebels another shot or two, but after firing my musket, I was in so much pain, that I concluded to leave the battle ground, and with that intention, I started to the rear, when two men of Company F, Marsh and Merchant were their names, were detailed to assist me. We started to the rear; March was on my right, and Merchant on my left side — my arms



upon their shoulders, and walking on my uninjured foot. We had gone but a short distance when I felt a distinct *thud* and poor Marsh fell dead — shot through the side. Merchant still helped me, and we proceeded but a few rods when he was killed — fell dead at my feet — a ball had passed through his head!<sup>33</sup> I was then left alone, and hobbled off as best I could and had not proceeded ten steps, when a musket ball struck me behind my right ear. I fell senseless. When I became conscious I examined my head and found the ball had carried away a small bunch of my hair and scalp, not penetrating my skull. I attempted twice to regain my feet, and each time fell — everything was whirling rapidly. The third time [I] succeeded, and I started off — saved my wounded limb as much as possible — was bleeding freely, and I began to feel weak. I saw a soldier standing behind a large tree — saw that he had a canteen, and asked him for water. He did not reply, but held up his canteen. I was really thirsty, having had no water all day. I put the canteen to my lips and took a large swallow — found to my discomfort that it was whiskey — he urged me to drink more, but I refused — I craved water to quench my burning thirst. I then asked him to assist me, which he did for a short distance, but about that time, our troops were forced to fall back, and the man who was helping, advised me to lie down behind a large log which we were passing. I refused, saying I never would be taken prisoner. He forsook me and ran off — our troops rallied again and held the enemy in check, and thus I was enabled to proceed, though slowly. — A ball grazed the middle fingers of my right hand, near the nails — another ball cut the fleshy part of my left hand, near the wrist — and a third passed between my left arm and body, close to the arm pit, not even abrading the skin, but greatly to the detriment of my blouse — which was seriously injured. Those were, however, mere bagatelles. . . .

Major Stone was wounded and taken prisoner, doubtless doing his duty.

. . .<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> William Marsh, age twenty-two, a native of Canada, was from West Union; George Merchant, age seventeen, was from New Oregon, Iowa. *Roster and Record*, 1:359, 360.

<sup>34</sup> William M. Stone, Major of the 3rd Iowa, had been wounded at Blue Mills, Mo., in 1861, and was captured at Shiloh. He was promoted to Colonel of the 22nd Iowa, Aug. 1, 1862, but resigned in August of 1863 to campaign for governor of Iowa, an office to which he was elected. He served two terms, 1864 to 1868. Another Iowa officer, Colonel James M. Tuttle of the 2nd, who commanded the First Brigade of the Second Division at Shiloh, was his unsuccessful Democratic opponent in the 1863 election in Iowa. Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:253; *Roster and Record*, 1:294.

A loose Cavalry horse which had lost his rider came trotting along, and I caught him by his halter-strap, mounted and rode to the Landing. Going down the hill which constitutes the Landing, I met Gen. Buell with a part of his forces coming to reinforce our almost exhausted troops. These reinforcements were throwing away their knapsacks as they went on the "double quick," the men were covered with mud, and wet up to their waists from wading creeks to join us. They arrived in time, and many a soldier's heart was gladdened by the sight of Gen. Buell's forces, and shout after shout rent the air as they moved rapidly onward eager to participate in the bloody fray. At the Landing I saw those miserable cowards who had run away in the morning. Their Officers were vainly trying to rally them and form them in line to assist our men who were bravely fighting about a mile and a quarter from the river, but many utterly refused to fight. I rode down to the boats, turned the horse loose, and some soldiers helped me on board the Commissary boat "Continental" which was crowded with wounded soldiers. Nearly every spot upon which a man could lie, was occupied — on boxes, and under tables; the floor of the cabin was covered. So numerous were the dead, dying and wounded, that a person could scarcely move without stepping upon them. I was finally placed upon some sacks of corn, which I did not occupy long, preferred the floor — ripped off my boot, bound up my foot with my handkerchief, and applied cold water.

The scene upon the boat was heart-rending — men wounded and mangled in every conceivable way — the dead and dying lying in masses, some with arms, legs, and even their jaws shot off, bleeding to death, and no one to wait upon them or dress their wounds — no Surgeons to attend us. I suppose there were about 1200 wounded on the boat; and thus we laid from Sunday night until Wednesday in the afternoon, without water, save when a soldier happened to pass through the boat in search of a comrade! and hundreds would beg for a canteen of water to cool their intense thirst and bathe their shattered limbs and ghastly wounds. Some begged the Captain to broach the Commissary Stores on the boat, but he would not allow them to be taken without a *requisition*! Many tried to buy when they could not beg food, each time the gong sounded summoning the crew to their meals, regularly three times a day, but the Captain replied that he had nothing to sell! I saw wounded men unable to move, and heard them *praying* for strength even to reach a musket to shoot the wretch! Enough of this sickening scene.

On Wednesday afternoon a Colonel of some Ohio Regiment came on board and immediately detailed a squad of soldiers to take possession of the caboose, and we soon got food. Each man received half a pint of beef soup, a small piece of boiled beef, a hard cracker and two small potatoes. This to us, was a feast; it satisfied our almost insatiable hunger. Soldiers were detailed to dress our wounds and we were rendered comparatively comfortable — the dead were buried. It was surprising to witness the heroic fortitude with which the wounded bore their sufferings, while they were nearly starving — with no one to attend to their wants.

On the Sunday following the battle, we were removed to the Hospital boat "Louisiana," and soon arrived at St. Louis, where we were kindly cared for.<sup>35</sup>

## SECOND DIVISION (Brigadier General W. H. L. Wallace)

### SECOND IOWA

#### *From the Iowa Second*

Pittsburgh Landing, Tenn.

April 8, 1862.

Mr. Editor: — The storm has fallen unexpectedly upon us. The rebels inspired by the name and eloquence of Beauregard, assisted by abundance of powdered whisky, attacked [sic] us with the fury of demons last Sunday morning. The battle raged all day Sunday. Buell, whose reinforcements the enemy dreaded, arrived on the opposite side of the river during the day and commenced crossing in the evening. Our outposts had all been abandoned and the enemy were within cannon shot of the landing at dark, when the firing ceased. Col. Tuttle's<sup>36</sup> Brigade, consisting of the Iowa 2nd, 7th, 12th and 14th, were surrounded and the last two taken prisoners. A few of each Regiment escaped. . . .

Yesterday after a terrible artillery duel for several hours, the enemy were forced to give way and nearly all our camps secured before night. The artillery taken from us has nearly all been retaken.

This morning McDowell's Brigade was attacked and driven in, but Buell was soon there and after them, and swears he will have our boys back if he has to march to New Orleans. We had no General nor Generalship until he came. Grant is played out most decidedly.

<sup>35</sup> Des Moines Register, June 11, 1862.

<sup>36</sup> See note 34.



Our mortality list is awful. . . .

H. S.<sup>37</sup>

Leonard B. Houston, of Co. D, 2d Iowa Infantry, writes to his friends in this City. In the course of his letter he says:

"It is hard to give any description of the battlefield which would make you realize what it was. I thought the battle of Donelson was awful, but it was a slight skirmish compared with the conflict at Pittsburgh [sic]. As I walked over the battlefield after the sanguinary engagement was over, I saw multitudes of the dead; and I saw great heaps of the dying who were calling for help; some begging for God's sake to give them a drink of water! The wounded were terribly mangled. In one place I saw the dead bodies of five men, all of whom had been killed by the same ball. Alive, they stood in line; dead, they lay together.

One incident of that day I will here record. While the battle was raging most terrifically, and when it seemed like a mighty hurricane sweeping everything before it; when the great storm of cannon balls made the forest in places fall before its sweep; when men and horses were dying, and a blaze of unearthly fire lit up the scene; at this moment of horror when our Regiment was lying close to the ground to avoid the storm of balls, the little birds were singing in the green trees over our heads! — They were as happy as if all were perfect calmness beneath them and around them! What a contrast between the happiness and innocence of those birds and the war of turbulent passions raging on that battlefield!

I don't know how our Regiment escaped. We were at one time surrounded, and had to cut our way through, with loss of 85 killed, wounded and missing."<sup>38</sup>

*From the Second Iowa*

Pittsburg Landing, Tenn.,

April 16, 1862.

*Editor Gate City:* The smoke of battle has cleared from the bloody field. The terrible visit we received from our brethren, the *Corinthians*, will not soon be forgotten. They seemed to "be perfectly joined in the same mind and the same judgment." — Great generalship was shown by the enemy.

<sup>37</sup> Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, Apr. 18, 1862.

<sup>38</sup> Des Moines *Register*, May 29, 1862.



None on our side, except by generals of divisions, until Buell came. When will the Government learn anything? — General Grant, in semi-disgrace for his conduct at Donelson,<sup>39</sup> was placed, without any public explanation, over the army here. Can such conduct be practiced upon so intelligent an army without an effect? I have ridden over the whole field, in every division, and am a frequenter of Grant's headquarters, and speak the sentiments of the army when I say that Gen. Grant is responsible for much of the terrible sacrifice of life on the 6th.

We fought on our own hook. "What was the plan of the battle, General?" asked Gen. Buell of Acting Brig. Gen. Tuttle. "By God, sir, I don't know!" he replied. Gen. Sweeney on our right, said he gave all his orders on his own hook, and so of many others. The army was scattered over about twenty square miles. The greenest regiments were on the outposts, and not a shovel full of dirt thrown up to protect them until they could be reinforced from the interior of the camp.<sup>40</sup> — As a natural consequence they were panic stricken and retreated in, reporting their regiments "all cut to pieces." Col. Peabody's Brigade, on the left, had none but green regiments, viz: the 12th Michigan, 16th Wisconsin, and the 23d and 25th Mo. They lost both their batteries, which were soon turned upon us. Sherman's regiments on the right and Prentiss in the centre had few troops that had ever seen a fight.

Our brigade, 2d, 7th, 12th, and 14th Iowa, under Gen. Tuttle, being encamped near the river, three fourths of a mile west of the Landing, marched out about 8 or 9 o'clock, found a hole in the lines four miles from the river

<sup>39</sup> Immediately after the victory of Feb. 15, 1862, at Fort Donelson, Grant had gone on to Nashville to consult with Buell on their next moves. His reports to Major General Henry W. Halleck, his superior, at St. Louis, miscarried, and Halleck, who had no love for Grant, complained to the authorities at Washington and was given orders to remove him. This he did, on March 3. There followed a series of letters of explanation; the misunderstanding was straightened out; and Grant was restored to his command on March 13. Badeau, *Military History of U. S. Grant*, 1:60-66; Grant, *Memoirs*, 1:325-9.

<sup>40</sup> Grant and Sherman both explained later why no entrenchments were made at Shiloh. Grant wrote: "Up to that time the pick and spade had been but little resorted to at the West. I had, however, taken this subject under consideration soon after re-assuming command in the field, and . . . my only military engineer reported unfavorably. Besides this, the troops with me, officers and men, needed discipline and drill more than they did experience with the pick, shovel and axe." Grant, *Memoirs*, 1:357. Sherman wrote: "We had no intrenchments of any sort, on the theory that as soon as Buell arrived we would march to Corinth to attack the enemy." Sherman, *Memoirs*, 1:275.

which we took possession of and *held* until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, when the enemy drove back the brigades on both sides of us and surrounded us, compelling us to fall back which we did, losing our left wing, 12th and 14th Iowa taken prisoners in so doing, besides quite a number of our men killed and wounded by the enemy's cross fire. We then found the main line falling back in a perfect rout despite the cheering news that Buell was crossing with his troops. Our brigade then formed in the line a mile west of the Landing and held it all night in a drenching rain, and next day assisted Buell in driving the enemy out of camps.

The Iowa regiments, I believe, *all* did well, and all the Illinois regiments. Some of the Ohio regiments acted shamefully.

Let it be remembered by the friends of the Iowa 2d that it was in the battles of Sunday and Monday, and on Tuesday, *of its own accord* went with Buell through mud and rain from morning till dark on armed reconnaissance. . . .

H. S.<sup>41</sup>

*Letter From Capt. N. W. Mills*<sup>42</sup>

Pittsburgh Landing, Tenn., April 9, 1862

Dear Brother: — On last Friday afternoon, a reconnaissance in force was made towards our lines by the rebels, and a skirmish was had at camp of 8th Iowa. That night cartridges were distributed to all the troops. Saturday was quiet, and a day of waiting. — Sunday morning at guard mounting, while standing in my position as retiring officer of the day, the enemy commenced on our lines with musketry. The long roll was beaten throughout the camps, and troops began moving rapidly. Our regiment soon fell into line, haversacks and canteens on, and with everything as near ready as it was possible to be at such a time. The 7th, 14th and 12th Iowa fell in on our left and the Brigade was formed, Col. Tuttle commanding, and moved out towards the line of battle, and took position with the remainder of Gen. W. H. L. Wallace's Division immediately in front of the battle line of the enemy and about the center of our lines. This position was about three

<sup>41</sup> Keokuk Gate City, Apr. 30, 1862.

<sup>42</sup> Noah W. Mills of Des Moines was mustered in as Second Lieutenant of Co. D, 2nd Iowa, on May 27, 1861. On June 1 he was promoted to Captain of the Company; one year later, June 22, 1862, he became lieutenant colonel. He was wounded in the battle of Corinth, Oct. 8, 1862, and died a few days later. *Roster and Record*, 1:174.

miles from our camp. While we were marching to it, the musketry firing was constant — first a fierce roll of it would be heard to the right, lasting several minutes, then on the left, with artillery firing at short intervals, at various points. Then it would settle down into a regular fight along the whole front of a brigade or division lasting for one, two or more hours.

But for fear I anticipate I must go back a little. A short time before we reached our position, Capt. [Robert] Littler was wounded in the arm by a passing shell, so that he had to return to the rear — his arm has been amputated. We were posted, the 12th and 14th Iowa, on the left and in the timber, with timber and brush in front. Our regiment and the 7th rested behind the fence of a cotton field — our right a hundred yards or so from a road running across the field, and a couple or three hundred yards from a house and out-houses deserted by their owner. A battery of the rebels was already posted just in front of us, in the timber across the field, which was playing alternately towards us and obliquely towards a battery at the left of our brigade. We had not been in position but a little while when a projectile of some kind knocked the dirt into the faces of several of us, and we considered ourselves called upon to be on the alert for fear of being taken unawares. A battery of our own was shortly afterwards posted on a little rise in our rear, which played on the rebels and drew their fire in our direction, but the discharges nearly all passed over our heads. This continued for a time when the enemy moved up and attacked the line where our left rested, and the 12th and 14th did some excellent fighting, driving the enemy back, when the enemy renewed the attack with increased vigor. Our men retired then to their first position, and forced them back again when they retired to attack some other point. Soon after, the firing commenced over to the right of us and continued for some distance away with considerable energy on both sides, and Colonel Sweeney, commanding brigade next to us, came wanting reinforcements for his left. — Our right wing was detached and marched down to the right till the left of Company D rested in the middle of the road, when we fronted towards the field. At this time the troops whose left rested near us in the brush fell back and the enemy planted a battery exactly opposite to us, supported by infantry but out of musket range. They fired so accurately that we laid down, when we were to some extent covered by a slight rise in the ground in front of us. This battery played over us at a furious rate, certainly with all styles of ammunition they had, answered by the battery on our side mentioned be-



fore. — We fired an occasional shot when we first came to the spot but the range was too long, and we ceased entirely. While we were here I received a glancing shot on my chin, which I think was from a canister shot which struck the earth before it did me. I thought I had a broken jaw till after examination I found the bones were all sound and that the hurt was of but small extent. Burbridge was struck at the same time on the arm, and many more might have been without precaution, for the shells and shot passed over us terrifically at about the height of a man's head from the ground while sitting down. This continued so long that it was a relief when the rebels began to advance upon us. There was a cry raised that they were our men. Lieut. Bradshaw of a Missouri Regiment who had dropped in with us handed me his glass and I stood up and examined them thoroughly till finally convinced that I was not mistaken, and at the same time I saw a flanking force moving in concert with them, coming out of the woods, to the left of them, and filing in the edge of the timber down towards the unoccupied ground that extended to our right, and immediately sent Lieut. Godfrey to inform Col. Baker that the enemy was flanking us. The Lieut. passed over the ground notwithstanding the raking fire which was poured across it and delivered the message in safety. We lay in wait for the approaching force till they were in good range, when we rose and fired a volley into them, and kept it up at will, receiving a brisk reply from them, in which several of our men were wounded and some killed. Sharp of my company got a buck shot in the side of his head which he still carries, and a stray bullet made a hole in one of my coat sleeves.

The rebels soon took cover out of sight of us and the firing ceased, except occasional shots from those who saw a chance for a little sharpshooting, when the right wing rejoined the regiment, and the order came from Col. Tuttle to fall back steadily. It did not come a *minute too soon*. The Brigades to the right and left of us had fallen back without orders from Gen. Wallace, leaving ours isolated in front of the enemy while his flanking parties were cutting us off. The one on our left fell back first, allowing the enemy to get in the rear of our two left regiments. When it was understood that we were being flanked on both sides, Gen. Wallace ordered Col. Tuttle, whose Brigade had held its ground all the time, to move back. We about-faced and commenced our march in line, but the 12th and 14th coming in contact with the enemy first, were forced to march by the flank, which resulted in a great many of them being cut off and taken prisoners,



but not till the enemy had opened fire on us from both the right and left. We were then obliged to make a flank march ourselves, passing through a murderous fire, along with several other regiments of Wallace's Division. This terribly hot spot was a road which passed by the camp of the Iowa 3d, and the ground contiguous to it. — The 7th and 2d were the last to come out of the angle, according to my observation. . . . A great many were killed and wounded while we were passing through the lines of opposing fire. The Adjutant's horse was shot under him. Gen. Wallace was brought down near our company, and the ground was strewn with wounded and killed. As soon as we arrived in the timber again in a position not so much exposed, all those who had not become too far separated were rallied, and moved to a position to repel an advance upon the successful maneuver of the rebels, but we had some revenge on them, for when we got out from between them, they pitched into each other, and at the same time a battery of ours commenced peppering them, and prevented them from coming farther. — A portion of Buell's force which we had anxiously expected all day, arrived at this juncture, and took position next the enemy, who brought up a battery and commenced a heavy fire toward us, which was replied to with such accuracy by guns of ours that they were forced to desist and move out of range.

About this time it began to rain, and the drops fell heavy, thick and fast for much of the night, on the men, but few of whom had the slightest protection against it. There was no firing from the enemy during the night, but our gun boats, to keep them awake, fired in their direction at intervals of half an hour.

At the breakfast hour in the morning, our reinforcements having been properly disposed, and our other force arranged for supports, the attack was made by our side with such cool determination that we soon began to see by the sound moving away, that the enemy were being driven, though slowly and steadily, before us. Our Brigade was moved by Col. Tuttle right along close to the line, ready at any moment to take another turn at the enemy. Part of the time we were under fire of artillery and part under musketry. Some time about noon or after, Gen. Buell called on Col. Tuttle for a regiment to send to the left to Gen. Nelson's [Brigadier General William Nelson, commander of the Fourth Division of Buell's Army of the Ohio] command; we were sent and conducted to the left nearly a mile, and placed in line in the edge of a field which terminated in an orchard, and

companies A, B. and D were deployed as skirmishers down into the orchard, to feel of the woods beyond, from which bullets were whistling numerously. I had just got Company D in position when the regiment came on the charge across the field towards us, led by Col. Baker. I immediately rallied my skirmishers on the battalion and we joined in, charging up to the woods, but the enemy had disappeared towards Corinth. No one was wounded here but Capt. Cox, severely in the knee. Videttes were thrown forward, who had an opportunity of sharpshooting at the stragglers in the rear of those who had occupied the woods. An Ohio regiment came up to us and took post on our left, and a battery in our rear played toward the rebel lines. We remained here hearing the fighting going on to our right, coming nearer to us, then even with us, then beyond us, and we knew the rebels were being forced to yield the ground. After a while the firing ceased, when it came to be understood that they were in full retreat. Towards evening Col. Tuttle sent for us, and we marched back to camp, all the ground lost the day before having been regained. The rebels had not destroyed our camps but had destroyed much of the property in them. In all of them were the dead and wounded of both sides. We passed through the ground we had lost the day before, and saw the effects of the fighting; nowhere were the dead out of sight, mangled in every conceivable way.

Next morning we were in the field again, in a new position, but there was no fighting in our immediate neighborhood, and at evening we were ordered back to camp, where we have since remained.

In our marching and countermarching and other operations on this great battle field we have had ample opportunities to observe the results of war. There is a scope of country about seven miles long and three miles wide, nearly every acre of which has been fought over, and the dead were, up to Tuesday noon, strewn all over it, and hundreds are not yet buried, but the work is going on as fast as possible. The scent from the dead horses, which decay sooner than human bodies, had already begun to pervade the air, when the weather turned cold and rainy and arrested the hurried decomposition.

In two places where we passed were clusters of five rebels killed by one discharge of cannon and terribly mangled; and I am very positive in saying, all prejudices aside, that there are at least two rebels killed to one on our side. There are places where you could stand in one spot and count 50 to 100 bodies at a time. Our artillery was better served than theirs and did

more execution. We had more of it; — and our musketry was better aimed. But it is time our people were getting rid of the idea that the courage is all on our side; it is a mistake. The enemy seemed to fight determinedly, and I know they fell back steadily when forced to, contesting every step of the way, until further resistance proved too disastrous.

During all the fight Col. Tuttle's presence was a tower of strength to us, and wherever "Yaller," the Colonel's horse, could be seen, confidence was there. What Col. Tuttle was to the Brigade, Col. Baker was to the regiment. However, the last two days, the authorities appreciating his ability, gave Col. Tuttle the command of a Division, and the last day Col. Baker command of a Brigade.

On Monday, while the 2d was detached, part of the Brigade under Tuttle assisted materially in taking a battery.

On Sunday our Brigade, exclusively an Iowa one, was the only one in that part of the line which held its place till its Division Commander, Gen. Wallace, ordered it back, for which we all think it and its commander deserve more than ordinary credit, done as it was in the face of an enemy considerably outnumbering us. The opportune arrival of Buell's forces made our number equal to if not larger than the enemy's. We are all enthusiastic concerning his manner of operating on Monday, and have abundant faith in him for the future. All of Company D who were there did well. . . .

Your affectionate brother,

NOAH W. MILLS<sup>43</sup>

#### SEVENTH IOWA

##### *Battle at Pittsburg Landing*

Sunday morning, April 6th, whilst taking breakfast, we were startled by the rapid firing of cannon in the direction of our advanced encampments. There had been a skirmish to our front the day previous, indicating the near presence of the Rebel forces. Yet it was deemed hardly possible that they would venture to attack us in full force. But the continuous roar of artillery, and the heavy volleys of small arms, soon dispelled all doubt, and convinced us that the great battle of the war had commenced. — Directly every camp was busy with the note of preparation. The long roll beat to

<sup>43</sup> Des Moines Register, Apr. 23, 1862.



quarters — ammunition was distributed — the men formed in line of battle, and advanced to support our front. Our camp was nearest the river, and our regiment, the 7th Iowa, was in the 1st Brigade of the 2d Division, (General Wm. [H.] L. Wallace commanding,) Col. Tuttle commanded the brigade. When brought to the front, we were placed near the centre. To our left was Gen. Hurlbut's division, to our right the division of Gen. McClernand. As we advanced to the front, we were met by stragglers from the regiments that had been driven back, some bare headed — some without guns — some powder begrimed and wounded, and some helping off others that were wounded. Army wagons loaded with baggage, and scattered parts of two or three batteries that had occupied a position nearest the advancing forces of the rebels, were mixed up promiscuously with the crowd of flying fugitives. Steadily onward through these advanced the 2d division to the relief of our hard pressed troops in front. We soon reached the point where it had been decided to make a stand. This was at nine o'clock. The fighting was then principally confined to the left wing of our forces.

Very soon, however, the enemy attacked our position. To the left was an open field. One of our batteries was placed in position to command this. Gen. Lauman's [Brigadier General J. G. Lauman commanded the Third Brigade of the Fourth Division] brigade, composed of the 31st and 44th Indiana, and the 17th and 25th Kentucky regiments, were ordered to support this, flanking it on the right, constituting also the right of Gen. Hurlbut's division. The 2d division occupied ground to the left of this, and was posted in the edge of the woods fronting an open field. These arrangements had hardly been effected before the rebels assailed our forces along nearly the whole extent of the line. The fight was opened by heavy cannonading, which was vigorously replied to by Willard's Chicago, and Major Cavander's Missouri batteries. Under cover of this fire, the rebel infantry advanced to the attack. Soon the whole line was one blaze of fire. Our men stood their ground firmly, and repelled four successive attacks. The storm of bullets was terrific. The most desperate charges of the enemy were against the position occupied by Gen. Lauman's brigade. But animated by his presence and example his men behaved like veterans. He rode up and down the lines, perfectly calm, and stopping here and there to address a cheering word to his men. I could not but admire his noble bearing, though momentarily expecting to see him fall. The Major of the 31st Indi-



ana fell mortally wounded near my side. Assistant Adj't General H. Scofield, was also disabled by a shot in the thigh. Colonel Crofts was wounded, Lt. Barnes, Aide to General Lauman, your correspondent, and Gen. Lauman himself, successively had our horses shot. But still the fight went on, and the rebels were forced to retire. The underbrush in front of our line was literally chopped to pieces by the repeated volleys of rifled musketry, and the ground was covered by the rebel dead. It was now about two o'clock P. M. The fighting had been heavy all day on both flanks, and now the left began to yield. Gen. Lauman was ordered to move to the support of our retiring troops. This he did; and by the most desperate fighting, and skillful handling of his brigade, saved the left wing from annihilation. But the moving off of these troops left a gap in our lines, of which the rebels, with their superior forces, were not slow to take advantage. About this time, the right also began to give way, and the 2d division was soon fairly flanked. The order was finally given for them to fall back, but it came too late to save all. The 8th, 12th and 14th regiments of Iowa Volunteers were cut off, surrounded, and after desperate fighting, forced to surrender. — The remains of our army were now driven close to the river, and the prayer of all was, "Would that night or Buell would come!"

The rebels were following up their advantages, and seemed on the point of cutting us off altogether. But most fortunately now, General Buell's advanced forces came up, and ranged themselves in line of battle. Col. Webster, Chief of Gen. Grant's Staff, had by this time, got some heavy siege guns into position, which began to pour a destructive fire upon the advancing columns of the enemy. They replied vigourously with both artillery and small arms, but were finally compelled to fall back. Night now closed upon the scene, and the forces on both sides slept on their arms.

The gunboats Tyler and Lexington had taken part in the closing fight and continued to throw shell amongst the rebels at intervals of fifteen minutes during the entire night. The scene was grand, yet sad, for thousands of our brave fellows lay bleeding on the ground, and we knew that the morning's light would see many more stricken down by the bullets of the enemy. During the night a heavy rain set in which completely drenched our exhausted troops laying out on the naked ground.

Before it was fairly daylight the next morning the battle was renewed by Gen. Nelson's Division on the left, and Gen. Lew Wallace's on the right. The rebels soon began to fall back, and were steadily followed up by Buell's

forces who were constantly arriving and immediately sent forward. All through the previous night the transports had been busy ferrying over his forces from Savannah nine miles below, and also from the opposite side of the river. Gen. Buell everywhere inspired confidence as he rode along the lines and addressed words of cheer to his troops. His superior generalship completely foiled the rebels in all their maneuvers, and whilst he preserved his own line of battle intact, he completely broke theirs, driving them from one position to another until we had regained all the ground lost on the preceding day — captured several batteries, and pursued them far out on the road to Corinth. The troops belonging to Gen. Grant's army that had fought on the previous day, including Generals McClernand, Sherman, Smith, Hurlbut, and Prentiss's Divisions were organized into reserves, and hurried on to the support of Buell's forces.

The fighting of the second day was principally done by the several divisions under General Buell's immediate command. All feel that our salvation is due to him alone. He himself arrived at the scene in advance of his troops, and riding up to our men assured them final victory if they could only hold the enemy in check until his troops arrived. At 5 o'clock p. m., he rode along the lines and said to our jaded and disheartened men, that if they would hold them in check two hours longer, he had men enough to engage them alone in the morning. . . .

Many of the dead still lie unburied. The battle field was one of the most heart rending sights it was ever my lot to witness. For miles the ground was strewn with the mangled remains of the dead, and the dying, and those disabled by their wounds. The loss on each side can only be counted by thousands. The rebels too took the most prisoners, but it is probable that their dead and wounded will far exceed ours. The fire of our artillery was terribly destructive to their ranks. . . .

C<sup>44</sup>

CAPTURE OF THE 8TH, 12TH, 14TH IOWA

*The Iowa Boys — A Correction*<sup>44</sup> Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, Apr. 18, 1862.

Headquarters 12th Reg't Iowa Infantry,  
Pittsburg, Tenn., April 23, 1862.

Editors Chicago Tribune: From reports of the battle of Pittsburg published in the St. Louis and Chicago papers, I notice that it is the general impression among the reporters that our Iowa men were taken prisoners in the early part of the engagement, on Sunday, and some have gone so far as to state that our soldiers threw down their arms with little or no resistance. The latter statement is too palpably false to deserve notice.<sup>45</sup>

The Iowa 8th, 12th and 14th went into the fight early in the day, held, and even gained ground during the day, while regiments on the right and left were repeatedly forced back, and not until 4 o'clock were they surrounded and taken prisoners. I examined the ground where they were taken, and it was literally covered with rebel dead. Our men instead of throwing down their arms, smashed them against trees, and raved like madmen because they were compelled to surrender.

The reason why they were taken was because they stood their ground while our forces on the right and left were driven back, allowing the enemy to surround them.

LIEUT. D. B. H.<sup>46</sup>

### *How the Three Iowa Regiments Happened to be Captured*

A correspondent of the Dubuque Times gives the following explanation of the manner of the capture of the 8th, 12th and 14th at the battle of Pittsburg:

Pittsburg Landing, Apr. 10.

Dear Times: — Though the news of our fight at Pittsburg Landing will reach you long ere this does, I will venture a line. The whistling of bullets is not as unpleasant as I had anticipated. But for their effect, the music would be exhilarating [sic]. — The rebels attacked us on last Sunday morning, with Beauregard in command. The army on both sides was immense,

<sup>45</sup> Early newspaper reports of the battle had claimed that the Iowa regiments had been overrun and captured — or had "surrendered" — at the first onslaught in the morning. Iowa papers took every opportunity to point out the error of this report. This and the following letter are examples of this defense. The various reports of officers published in the *Official Records* give the time of surrender at between 5:30 and 6 in the afternoon.

<sup>46</sup> Keosauqua *Republican*, May 9, 1862.



and the carnage commensurate. The battle field was six miles long, and the range of the Minnies and Dahlgreens will indicate the width.

On Sunday about 7 o'clock p. m. one portion of the line of our troops composed of several Iowa Regiments with Ohio troops on one flank, and Illinois troops on the other, seemed to be a point of special attack. The enemy charged with both infantry and cavalry. In this hour of peril, when every man ought to do or die, the Ohio and Illinois troops fell back, or rather took to their heels, and fled leaving the line something in the shape of a U, the middle of the letter being represented by the Eighth, Twelfth, and Fourteenth Iowa. This conduct on the part of the right and left flanks, while the Iowa boys stood their ground, gave the advancing enemy a chance to surround our boys, which they were not slow to improve, and though they fought bravely, they could not escape. And they fought, till their officers saw that to continue the struggle was to sacrifice *all* the noble lives entrusted to their keeping, so what could they do but surrender?

Even then it was with difficulty that the boys could be induced to cease fighting, many of them preferring certain death to surrender. But it was inevitable, and now those three noble Iowa regiments above named, are prisoners.

Where, in the meantime, were the troops who ought to have stood by the Iowa boys? Away down at the steamboat landing, huddled together like frightened sheep, to the number of thousands!! And there they staid, and even refused to return at the command of distinguished officers, until the General in command ordered our own gunboats to commence shelling them, if they remained disobedient!!!

Mr. Editor, these are rather stubborn facts, more so because the organs of military renown, especially of Illinois, have sought of late to claim all bravery for their own men. . . .<sup>47</sup>

## AFTERMATH

### *Our Army Correspondence*

Camp of the 11th Iowa  
Pittsburg Landing, Tenn.

April 19, 1862.

Dear Journal: — Quiet is once more restored along our lines. The heavy

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, May 2, 1862.



booming of cannon and the clashing of small arms is heard no more. Peace, temporary peace, now reigns, and we have full time to review the devastation of the field on which the late battle was fought. Now we may study the revolting effects of war, the fruits of which bring naught but bitterness and woe to a once happy and prosperous people. To appreciate fully its horrors one has but to participate in a battle, or visit the ground before the interment of the dead. This I have done and seen, and God knows that I have little desire to witness a re-occurrence of the scene again.

The mangled bodies and the groans of the suffering wounded cause one to fully realize the dreadful storm, the result of which has entailed so much misery on the friends of those who were engaged in the slaughter. Many anxious parents will look in vain for the return of their sons whose bones are now mouldering in one common grave by the side of strange companions. Such is the fate of war.

The woods around, in which we are encamped present a different appearance from what it did before the battle. Scarcely is one's eyes directed to a tree or bush that does not bear the mark of a cannon or musket ball. The desolation is complete. Visitors from the different States, sent here to enquire into the condition of their respective troops, are loaded down with trophies of the field. You see one man seize upon a gun twisted into an extraordinary shape by its collision with a cannon projectile, another contents himself with procuring fragments of shells, flattened bullets, &c., while one, more ambitious than the rest, carries off the field a 60 pound shell thrown from one of the gunboats. The soldier is satisfied to see the sights and let the missiles repose as they were thrown from the mouths of the guns.

Our dead and those of the enemy's are buried promiscuously, through the forest, the ground chosen for our own dead being generally on high land and marked by neat head-boards with suitable inscriptions, erected by the boys to distinguish them from those of the rebel dead, and also to enable their friends to find their last resting places should they ever wish to disinter them.

The wounded rebels have been sent down the river and have either gone to St. Louis or Chicago. One old man I noticed was badly wounded; he was accompanied by three sons who refused to desert him and fell prisoners to the Federals. Another my attention was particularly directed to; he was a Lieutenant in a company from New Orleans; his wound was in the

thigh and painful in the extreme. He, however, seemed very patient. While watching him he motioned me toward him and requested that I would raise him in a position that he might rest on his elbow. This I did. He then grasped my hand and asked me "do you think I will get well?" I answered that I thought he would, and that his wound was not necessarily a fatal one. At this reply the poor fellow burst into tears and said: "O, my mother, my poor mother, what will she do? she will think me dead!" The sight was truly affecting. I consoled him as best I could, and informed him that I thought, in all probability, his mother would, by some means, learn of his whereabouts, and promised that I would write her if he wished for this promise. He seemed gratified and expressed his gratitude by warmly pressing my hand. This was the last I saw of him; the next day he was sent down the river. He seemed to appreciate the kindness shown him by our boys, and acknowledged that they were more humane than he had been led to believe before making their acquaintance. . . .

E.C.H.<sup>48</sup>

*From the 6th Iowa*

We have been permitted to publish the following extracts from a letter from Ed. Fracker [who] had been home on furlough, and did not get to Pittsburg until two hours after the fight.

Pittsburg Landing,  
April 10th, '62.

We left Savannah [and] arrived at this place just at dusk; it is no town or settlement but merely a landing. . . . I went ashore. Here all was hurry and confusion; wagons were hurrying off to the battle-field after wounded, soldiers were running around hunting comrades to learn the whereabouts of their regiments, details were coming in for provisions, from the boats, for the hungry fighters, now resting in their recovered camps, squads of "secesh" prisoners were scattered over the shore guarded; but among all the crowd I could not see a familiar face. I enquired of many soldiers for my regiment, also for the 16th. . . . but could get no answer as to their whereabouts, except that they were on the field, and both regiments "all cut to pieces." It was now quite dark and I began to look around for a place of shelter for the night, as it was beginning to rain. I went up

<sup>48</sup> Muscatine Journal, May 2, 1862.

<sup>49</sup> Iowa City Republican, Apr. 23, 1862.

the hill to a lot of tents and a log house, but all were full of the wounded, the dead and the dying; every inch of shelter afforded by tents, houses, or wagons were occupied and used as hospitals. While wandering around I came across a poor fellow lying on his back with his face turned up to the rain; its paleness attracted my attention; I placed my hand on his forehead, it was very cold, he was the first dead I had seen, and not wishing to see more that night, I put my baggage under a table, near the log house, to keep it dry if possible, then throwing my blanket over my head and shoulders I sat down on a stool near them with my back against the house, but tired as I was I could sleep or rest but little in this position, surrounded by the groaning victims, and the noise of the coming and going ambulances; but I kept my position until day began to break. . . .

I started off to find the 6th, following the road and passing camp after camp I soon began to see signs of the battle, and the further I went the thicker they became. I passed over hills and hollows, through woods and fields. The dead lay scattered on every side; dead horses, broken down cannon, muskets and equipments, clothing, bullets and cannon balls everywhere. I had passed over five or six miles, when arriving where the dead were the thickest I found our Orderly Serg't and a private of my Co. searching for our missing men. . . . We then started for our camp, passing numbers of dead lying in all positions, eyes open and glaring; men were busy at work burying them, two or three deep in a hole, our men in front, the rebels behind them.

We found our boys hard at work cooking and straightening up the camp, for the rebels when they had possession of it Sunday night had broken open everything and carried off blankets and clothing of all kinds; our officers lost everything except what they had with them on the field. . . .

## HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

### *State Historical Society of Iowa*

During the months of March, April, and May, the Society added 183 new members to its rolls. During this period four members became Life Members: Mrs. Ralph J. Viner, Elliott; Mr. C. W. Moody, Burlington; Mr. Joe C. Sage, Waterloo; and Mr. Roy Ewers, Iowa City.

Dr. J. H. Lepper of Mason City presented the Society with a collection of historical photographs, many taken by Dr. Lepper himself, dating from 1894. Among the pictures are views of a National Guard Park-Gatling gun crew at the railway strike in 1894; the Clear Lake guard encampment of 1903, attended by Governor Albert B. Cummins; the Chariton band of 1895; the old Mason City-Clear Lake interurban cars; and the army dirigible RS-1 when it visited Mason City in August, 1928.

On June 4, 1954, some 100 members of the Society enjoyed a cruise on the Missouri River made possible through the courtesy of Brigadier General W. E. Potter. The trip was part of a regularly scheduled inspection tour by the United States Army Engineers, and also served as a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition up the Missouri River. A barge pulled by the *John Ordway* (a government boat named for one of the participants of the Lewis and Clark expedition) provided space for the Historical Society members.

The seventh annual Mississippi River Steamboat Cruises, sponsored by the Society, were held June 25, 26, 27, and July 3, 4, 5. Each day's trip was made from Clinton on the *Rob Roy III*, owned by Commodore O. D. Collis of Clinton.

Dr. William J. Petersen, superintendent, and Dr. Mildred Throne and Dr. Robert Rutland of the Society staff, attended the annual meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, at Madison, Wisconsin, April 22-24.

Dr. Robert Rutland, research associate of the Society, has resigned to accept a position in the graduate journalism department of the University of



California at Los Angeles. Dr. Rutland will spend the summer in Oklahoma doing newspaper work, and will take up his duties in California in the fall.

Dr. George S. May has been appointed research associate of the Society, to succeed Dr. Robert Rutland. Dr. May received his doctorate from the University of Michigan. He has taught at Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania, and has been a research assistant on the Michigan Historical Collections. Several of his articles have been published in *Michigan History*, *The New Leader*, and *Michigan Christian Advocate*.

Governor William S. Beardsley has appointed two new curators to the State Historical Society, to replace Georgiana Amsden of Webster City and William D. Houlette of Des Moines. The new members are William R. Ferguson of Glidden and Ralph E. Shannon of Washington. The remaining curators appointed by the governor were reappointed for two-year terms.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S CALENDAR

April 19	Addressed Ottumwa Rotary
April 22-24	Attended Mississippi Valley Historical Association meeting, Madison, Wisconsin
April 29	Addressed Muscatine City Teachers Association
May 10	Addressed Centennial of Iowa State Education Association at Muscatine
May 14	Commencement address, Edgewood
May 20	Commencement address, Wyman
May 21	Commencement address, Parnell
May 26	Commencement address, Wayland
June 1	Addressed Iowa City Kiwanis
June 4	WHO radio interview, Des Moines
June 15	Addressed Luther College Convocation at Decorah
June 15	Addressed Decorah Rotary
June 17	Special Missouri River Inspection Cruise

#### *Iowa Historical Activities*

The Chickasaw County Historical Society is enlisting the aid of school children from kindergarten through high school in collecting and preserving the history of the county. The school children are urged to collect stories

of the county's history from their families or neighbors, to write up the stories, and to turn them in to their teachers. Many of these stories are being published in the newspapers of the county, and about 1,000 of the best will be published in a pamphlet to be sponsored by the Historical Society.

The Iowa State Education Association celebrated its centennial at Muscatine — the site of its first meeting in 1854 — on May 10. A plaque in commemoration of the founding of the Association was placed in the courthouse and dedicated by Superintendent William J. Petersen, who also addressed the centennial meeting.

Since 1954 is the centennial of the first Iowa State Fair, which was held at Fairfield, the occasion will be observed, not only at the State Fair at Des Moines in August, but at Fairfield also, where a 60-day period of observances was inaugurated on June 28 with an historical parade.

The following Iowa towns observed centennials this summer: Fredericksburg, June 13-15; Alden, June 17-19; Waterloo, June 21-26; Center Point, June 25-26; Dixon, July 2-5; Durant, July 2-5; Sioux City, July 24-August 1; Greene County, August 1-6.

A group known as "The Preservers of Dallas County History" met at the Adel Public Library on June 10, 1954. Rev. Ben Sinderson presided, and Miss Florence Clark acted as secretary. The organization discussed the establishment of a museum at Adel for the purpose of assembling and preserving antique items dealing with the history of the county.

The Tama County Historical Society held its annual meeting April 10, 1954, at Toledo, and re-elected the following officers: president, Roy Shaffer; vice-president, Harold Hufford; secretary-treasurer, E. A. Benson; and vice-chairman of the board of directors, Mrs. J. G. Ennis.

Officers elected at the annual meeting of the Four County Historical Society at Belle Plaine, May 7, 1954, were: president, George Raabe; vice-president, Waldo McLennan; secretary-treasurer, B. H. Guinn.

The following officers were re-elected at the annual meeting of the Mahaska County Historical Society May 12, 1954, at Oskaloosa: president, M. H. Pothoven; vice-president, J. C. Mattix; secretary, Miss Zola

Kramme; curator, Stillman Clark; historian, Mrs. Stillman Clark. A board of directors was also elected, including Fred Mattix, Leo Broerman, John Eveland, Mrs. Hoyt Beans, Earl Wilson, and Hobart Morris.

The Chickasaw County Historical Society sponsored a display of antiques at Fredericksburg, June 14-15, 1954, in honor of that town's centennial.

The Order of Railway Conductors, at their meeting at Columbus, Ohio, May 6, 1954, voted to place a bronze marker on the grave of Kate Shelly at the Sacred Heart cemetery in Boone, Iowa. The ceremony will take place on July 6, 1956, seventy-five years after Kate Shelly, then fifteen years old, crawled across a broken trestle over Honey Creek to stop the "Lightning Express" from being wrecked during a storm.

On May 28, 1954, Dr. William J. Petersen presented to the Iowa Conservation Commission a citation from the American Association for State and Local History in recognition of the Commission's work in restoring and maintaining buildings connected with Iowa's early history. The award was made principally for the restoration and maintenance of the Governor Robert Lucas Home in Iowa City. Lucas was the first territorial governor of Iowa.

In honor of the discovery of the Mississippi River in 1673 by Marquette and Joliet, the Rev. Francis J. Phelan and the Catholic Daughters of America of Northeast Iowa have placed a plaque at the front entrance of St. Mary's Catholic Church at McGregor. The bronze plaque reads: "Catholic History of Iowa, and of the Plains States west of the Upper Mississippi, began at the Hills of this Parish, when, on June 17, 1673, Pere Jacques Marquette, S. J., a Catholic Priest, together with Louis Joliet, discovered the Upper Mississippi River, naming it 'River of the Immaculate Conception.' "

The Betsy Ross chapter of the Daughters of American Colonists at Burlington has placed a marker at the grave of the Indian chief, Tama, on Highway 99, three miles north of Burlington. The inscription reads, in part: "In Memory of Chief Taimah (Tama) of the Fox tribe, Thunder clan. . . . An Indian gentleman and a true friend of the early white settlers." The marker has been placed some twenty rods from the grave of the famous Indian chieftain.

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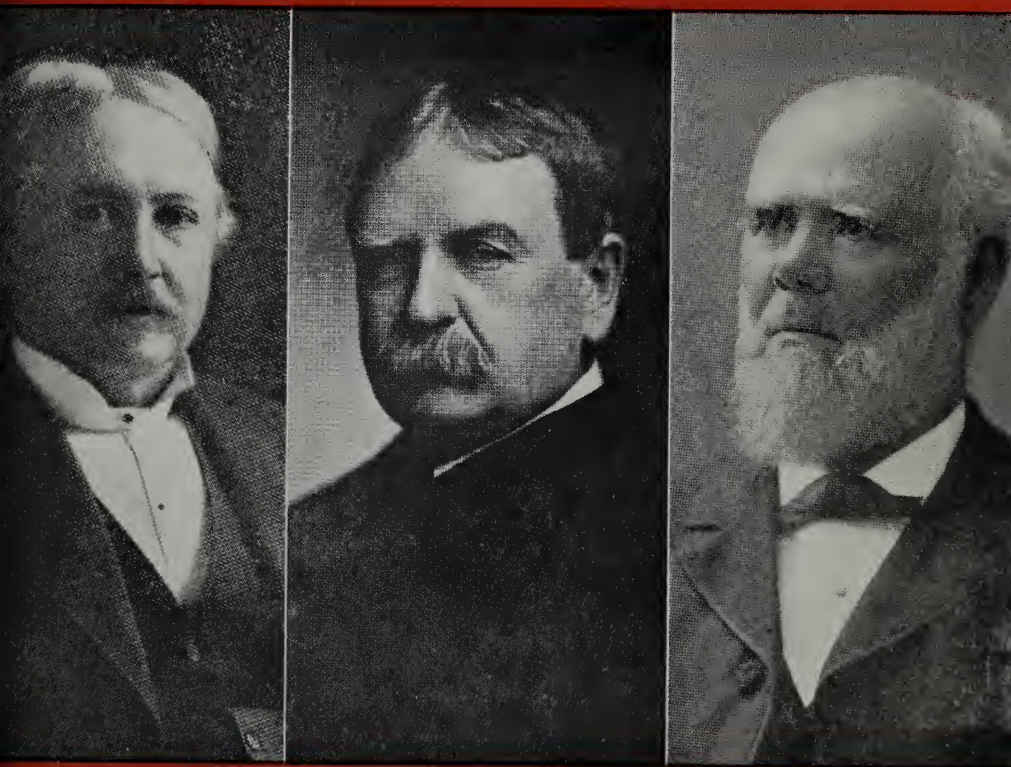
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## COVER

Three Iowa editors of the 1870's. *Left to right:* John P. Irish, Democrat, Iowa City Press; James S. Clarkson, Republican, Des Moines Register; Edward H. Thayer, Democrat, Clinton Age.

# THE ANTI-MONOPOLY PARTY IN IOWA, 1873-1874

*By Mildred Throne\**

In 1873 and 1874 the farmers of Iowa revolted against low prices and high freight costs. Socially and economically, this revolt found expression in the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange as it was more popularly known; politically, in the birth of the short-lived Anti-Monopoly party.

The call for a new party—variously called Reform, People's, or Anti-Monopoly—came from the farmers whose class-consciousness had been aroused by the Granger movement. Times were hard, the prices for farm produce were low, the cost of farm machinery and of transportation remained high. For almost a decade the Iowa farmer had been asking his legislators to regulate the freight rates charged by the railroads. At each session of the legislature he had watched while the lawmakers hesitated and then retreated from taking such a step.<sup>1</sup> At last, in the face of dire warnings from the majority of the press of the state, the farmer took the reins into his own hands and sent out a call for a new political party.

He was inexperienced, and he had but one plank in his platform—regulate the railroads. He believed that all his problems would be solved, if only he could force the railroads to cut their freight rates. The Republicans looked on with horror at this revolt of the voters; the Democrats, long out of power in Iowa, watched with calculating eyes. And the leaders of the Grange tried to keep their organization—if not their members—out of this political experiment.

The constitution of the Order expressly forbade any political action, as an Order. When a group of Grangers at Waterloo in Black Hawk County took it upon themselves to resolve to support the retiring State Master, Dudley W. Adams, for the gubernatorial nomination, Adams quickly rebuked them: “. . . as our order was not organized as a political party, per-

\*Mildred Throne is associate editor of the State Historical Society of Iowa.

<sup>1</sup> See Earl S. Beard, “The Background of State Railroad Regulation in Iowa,” *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 51:1-36 (January, 1953). For the Grange, see Mildred Throne, “The Grange in Iowa, 1868-1875,” *ibid.*, 47:289-324 (October, 1949).

mit me to say in all kindness to my brother patrons, that it seems most injudicious to divert it from its original plan, as tending not only to defeat the very object aimed at in the present, but also endangering our usefulness in the future."<sup>2</sup>

Other Grangers, and many newspapers, were not so gentle in criticizing the action of the Waterloo group. Coker F. Clarkson, a member of the Grange, farm editor of the *Des Moines Register*, and father of that paper's powerful Republican editor, James S. Clarkson, wrote that the men at Waterloo were probably not really Grangers, but enemies of the Order seeking to embarrass it.<sup>3</sup> William Duane Wilson, editor of the *Iowa Homestead* and himself an active Granger, joined Clarkson in his denunciation of the action taken at Waterloo. "If those restless spirits in the Order," he wrote, "who are so anxious to control politicians and make nominations for offices cannot effect their object in any other way than in the Order, they should be taught that its folds are not such as can safely embrace men who cannot appreciate its unselfish principles."<sup>4</sup>

The editor of the *Waterloo Courier* was incensed at the action and took it upon himself to clear the Grangers of his county of any connection with the affair. He urged the press of the state not to blame the Patrons of Black Hawk County for the action of a secret meeting of a few men "who concocted it on the sly for purposes of their own." John P. Irish, fiery Democratic editor of the *Iowa City Press*, who was watching the political upsurge of the farmers with care, promptly came to the defense of the instigators: "We do not now recollect of having read a more arrogant, impudent and thoroughly silly production than that string of abuse of Iowa gentlemen who have only used a right which is every American's birth right, viz: the right to name a public policy or men for public office." In Davenport, David N. Richardson, editor of the *Democrat* of that city, agreed with Irish and welcomed the Waterloo nominations as a sign that the farmers' movement would soon lead to the overthrow of the Republican party.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Letter of D. W. Adams, dated Waukon, April 16, 1873, and published in *Waukon Standard*, April 24, 1873. Waterloo meeting reported in *Iowa Homestead*, April 11, 1873, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of C. F. Clarkson, dated April 8, 1873, and published in *Iowa Homestead*, April 18, 1873, p. 125.

<sup>4</sup> William Duane Wilson in *ibid.*, April 18, 1873, p. 125.

<sup>5</sup> *Waterloo Courier*, quoted in *Waukon Standard*, May 1, 1873; *Iowa City Press*, April 25, 1873; *Davenport Democrat*, April 10, 1873.

The Grange, as an Order, properly repudiated any political activity in its name; but that did not prevent individual Grangers and like-minded farmers from capitalizing on the general unrest by sponsoring independent political meetings. The first such meeting was held in Des Moines on May 6, 1873, with about fifty persons present. John B. Miller, a Republican and a former county judge and auditor, was chosen president of the meeting; J. M. Walker, formerly chairman of the Democratic state central committee, was selected as secretary; and John Youngerman, a Polk County farmer, presented a resolution calling for a county "Anti-Monopoly Convention" of all those opposed "to the encroachments of the rings and monopolies on the rights of the people . . . for consultation as to the propriety of nominating candidates to be supported by the people at the October elections."<sup>6</sup> This first call for a new party was representative in that it had as its ringleaders one man from each party and one farmer. It would not be long, however, before the Democratic element would push the Republicans and the farmers into the background and take over the new movement as its own.

The meeting called for at the Des Moines gathering was set for June 7. Within a few days a call endorsing such a meeting appeared in the *Des Moines Register*, with some 200 to 300 names as sponsors. A check of the names with the county history published several years later indicates that the majority of the signers were farmers with little or no political experience. Certain names stand out, however: William Duane Wilson, one of the leading Grangers of the state; Thomas Mitchell, a prominent Republican of the county; M. L. Devin, a Democrat and treasurer of the State Grange; E. L. Burnham and C. D. Reinking, described by the *Register* as "excited" Liberals and anti-Republicans.<sup>7</sup>

When the full-fledged county convention met on June 7 there were some 150 to 200 delegates present, representing all but one or two of the townships of Polk County. "It was a farmers' convention, in large majority," reported the *Register*. But, although politically the membership was about equally divided between Democrats and Republicans, it was the former who took over the organization of the party, aided by Republicans of the

<sup>6</sup> *Des Moines Register*, May 7, 1873; see *History of Polk County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1880), 901, 1036-7, for sketches of Walker and Youngerman; *ibid.*, 494, refers to Judge Miller's offices.

<sup>7</sup> *Des Moines Register*, May 28, June 8, 1873; *History of Polk County*, 936-7.



Liberal persuasion. Their aim, according to James S. Clarkson of the *Register*, "was the disruption and disorganization of the Republican party." The result, he claimed, was that the Democrats and Liberal Republicans turned the meeting from a farmers' movement to an "anti-Republican and anti-Grant party, simply and purely this, nothing less and nothing else." Its platform, continued Clarkson, would be satisfactory to any Democrat. Although it was merely a county convention, it took upon itself the task of creating a state central committee of five members composed of two "real" Republicans, two "excited" Liberals, and one out-and-out Democrat. The *Register* concluded its comments with the assertion that William Duane Wilson and A. B. Smedley, the latter the new Grand Master of the State Grange, had called the meeting "unwise in its policy and most unfortunate in its conclusions."<sup>8</sup> This last comment, of course, was an effort by the Republican *Register* to warn the Grangers away from the Anti-Monopoly party.

Wilson and Smedley immediately denied the statements that Clarkson had attributed to them. "I approve of the meeting," wrote Wilson, "and every resolution thereof, except that calling for a State convention." Smedley, on the other hand, assured Clarkson that as Master of the Grange, which repudiated all political activity, he "would not presume to criticize their action in any manner whatever."<sup>9</sup> The nonpartisan antimonopoly sentiments of the farmers, voiced through the Granges, had been taken over by a frankly political movement, and the Grange officers were treading lightly. They sympathized with the new party but did not intend to let the Grange be publicly linked with it.

In 1925, when his memory had possibly dimmed a little, William H. Fleming, secretary to a number of Iowa governors and thus on the inside of the political activities of the time, wrote of the Anti-Monopoly party:

. . . the party began in the county of Polk, and its first movement was in opposition to John A. Kasson, and largely made up of persons friendly to the railroad interests. It got up a local ticket composed of Republicans that were not friendly to Kasson, in fact emphatically hostile to him, but it adopted certain resolutions plausibly framed favoring railroad regulation, and took for itself

<sup>8</sup> Des Moines *Register*, June 8, 1873.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, June 10, 1873.

the name of the "Antimonopoly" party. The suggestion of "anti-monopoly" took with the Granger movement.<sup>10</sup>

John A. Kasson, then representing the seventh district (which included Des Moines) in the lower house of Congress, belonged to the faction of the Republican party that James S. Clarkson and his followers were busily trying to destroy. The Clarkson-Kasson feud was rapidly assuming magnificent proportions by 1873, and Clarkson would certainly have welcomed any movement unfriendly to Kasson. But his account of the meeting contains no hint of such an attitude; in fact, he went out of his way to report just the opposite:

Messrs. Reinking, Devin and Burnham have always been, and are now, intimate and devoted friends and ardent supporters of the present Congressman of this District, and in all his fights have been active and prominent in his support. Whether the delivery of the Committee over to such a majority as this means anything or not, the public needs no help in concluding.<sup>11</sup>

It can be deduced, therefore, that Fleming's account of the origin of the Anti-Monopoly party in Polk County is in error. He suggests first, that the movement was started to destroy Republican Kasson, and second, that its lip service to railroad regulation "took" with the Grangers. Rather, it can be seen now that the origin of the movement stemmed from the Grange, where the antimonopoly sentiment of the farmer was finding united expression, and not from any local political feud. The demand for state regulation of railroad rates was older than the Grange; that Order merely speeded the development of organized political activity in its favor. Nothing in the practices of the Patrons of Husbandry led to the Anti-Monopoly party, but the Order did bring the farmers together; the farmers had problems; they discussed those problems and sought solutions for them. And their biggest problem, or so it seemed to them, was the high rates charged by the railroads. Every session of the General Assembly since 1865 had considered bills to regulate freight rates, but such legislation had consistently failed of passage. By 1873 many farmers had lost faith in the old parties, and their political allegiances were weakening. The rapid growth of the Grange had shown them that they could organize for social and economic betterment;

<sup>10</sup> William H. Fleming, "The Autobiography of a Private Secretary," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 15:19-20 (July, 1925).

<sup>11</sup> Des Moines Register, June 8, 1873.

why not for political action also — if not within the Grange, then within some party of their own. Thus, the Anti-Monopoly party grew out of the Granger movement rather than being adopted by the Grangers, as Fleming suggested.

The Anti-Monopoly idea spread rapidly through the state — another indication that it had a much wider base than the political future of John A. Kasson. The June 7 meeting in Polk County had sent out a call for a state convention, to be held in Des Moines on August 13, to nominate candidates for the state offices of governor, lieutenant governor, supreme court judge, and superintendent of public instruction. Many counties called conventions to nominate delegates for this convention, and the Republicans began to worry.<sup>12</sup> As early as April, Charles Aldrich had written to his friend, Governor C. C. Carpenter:

I went through the Know Nothing times & I know how clannishly men run wild over such matters. The leaders who get on the top wave ride it until it spends its force. They are making Grangers every day, & they now have nearly 10,000 votes enrolled. I think this matter deserves the fullest investigation by our friends. The corruptions of Congress, the extortion of the R. R. Companies, the low prices of produce, hard times & all, have "fired the farmers heart." I think they are now determined to "bust the heads" of the politicians. They have thrown the tea into the harbor, & wisely or unwisely they are in for a determined struggle.<sup>13</sup>

At first, both parties were uncertain as to what to do about the movement. In spite of the long agitation for railroad regulation, it had not been until the 1870 campaign that either party had recognized the issue in its platform. In that year the Democrats had "asserted" the right of the people "by legislative enactment, to tax, regulate, and control all moneyed corporations upon which extraordinary rights are conferred by charters." The Republicans had countered with a statement that they favored "such legislation as will protect the people from the oppression of monopolies controlled by and in the interest of corporations." These meaningless phrases brought no action by a Republican-dominated legislature. The 1871 Demo-

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, June 4, 5, 19, 1873; *Newton Free Press*, May 28, June 4, 18, 25, July 2, 1873; *Belle Plaine Union*, June 10, July 3, 1873; *Ottumwa Democrat*, Aug. 14, 28, 1873; *Webster City Hamilton Freeman*, July 2, 1873.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Aldrich to C. C. Carpenter, April 1, 1873, *Cyrus Clay Carpenter Papers* (State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City).



cratic platform repeated the "right of the people" to regulate corporations and in addition favored taxing the railroads equally with other property. The Republicans joined with the Democrats in approving a "uniform system of taxation," and they strengthened their plank on legislative regulation of corporations, even going so far as to name railroads as organs of "monopoly and extortion." In the 1872 presidential campaign, both parties — the regular Republicans and their combined Liberal Republican-Democratic opponents — ignored the issue.<sup>14</sup> Now, with 1873, and the transfer of the farmers' protest from mere oratory to a political movement, both parties found it necessary to take a definite stand.

Most Republican papers alternately scolded and courted the Grangers. "Father" Clarkson, in a two-column article in the *Des Moines Register*, tried valiantly to equate the principles of the Grange and its war on railroads with the policies of Republicanism. Should the Grangers "plunge into separate political action," he warned, they will alienate both parties. Better that they stay under the "proud banner of the Republican party . . . which has saved the country from rebellion and the public treasury from pillage." Stay within your old party — preferably the Republican — and "vigilantly work therein" to control nominations. Furthermore, "Father" continued on another day, if you have any complaints about the men who represent you in the legislature, it is your own fault. You, the farmer, hold the balance of power at the ballot box; if you fail to use it you have no one to blame but yourself. "There is a vast amount of ungenerous croaking by farmers, about public officers, when the farmers themselves are responsible for such men being in office."<sup>15</sup>

This was, of course, nonsense, and Father Clarkson knew it. By the time the farmer reached the ballot box his candidate had been chosen for him by a carefully manipulated convention. In the days before primary elections, a candidate had only to secure the backing of a few of the leaders of his party in each locality to gain nomination in a convention. The farmers, unless they did combine to control the nominating conventions, had no voice, as a class, in politics.<sup>16</sup> The instigators of the Anti-Monopoly

<sup>14</sup> The party platforms appear in Herbert S. Fairall, *Manual of Iowa Politics . . . 1838 to 1884* (Iowa City, 1884), 83-9.

<sup>15</sup> Coker F. Clarkson in *Des Moines Register*, April 25, May 16, 1873.

<sup>16</sup> For the technique of controlling political conventions, see Leland L. Sage, "William B. Allison and Iowa Senatorial Politics, 1865-1870," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*,



movement were on the right track; if neither of the old parties would come forward with a candidate pledged to support the farmers' demands, then they themselves must provide such candidates. And the place to do that was not at the ballot box but in the county, district, and state nominating conventions. But neither party wanted to see this happen. From the politicians came pious warnings to the farmers to stay out of the dirty business of politics.

A Jasper County editor warned the farmers "against a move that must end in defeat and humiliation," and cautioned the Republican voters "against being lured to a feast that must in course of preparation become offensively tainted with the leaven of Democracy." In the Belle Plaine *Union* a correspondent who signed himself "Incognito" warned against reformers, who are usually only "hungry office-seekers," recalled the fate of the Liberal movement of 1872, and concluded, after a great many words, with "silent contempt" for such activities. The "substantial reforms" which the people wanted could be obtained better under the "great progressive Republican party," wrote the editor of a Webster City paper.<sup>17</sup>

And so it went, throughout the Republican press of the state. Little heed was paid the question of railroad regulation — the backbone of the Anti-Monopoly program. Rather, the Republican attack on the new movement was an indirect assault on the political opposition, whether it was Democratic or the Liberal Republican remnants left over from 1872. Governor Carpenter, during the campaign, asked his audiences: "What better Anti-Monopoly party do you need than the Republican party?" The reform movement was one of "shameless dishonesty" dominated by Democrats, he assured them.<sup>18</sup> In the Republican book, that was all the argument needed. No effort was made to oppose the Anti-Monopoly demand for railroad regulation. In fact, the Republicans had included the usual plank in their platform, supporting such a policy. Therefore, their tactics were to damn the movement as Democratic-controlled.

It is quite obvious, from a study of the newspapers of 1873 and 1874, that the Republicans had a valid argument. By the time the Anti-Monopo-

52:97-128 (April, 1954); Mildred Throne, "Electing an Iowa Governor, 1871: Cyrus Clay Carpenter," *ibid.*, 48:335-70 (October, 1950).

<sup>17</sup> Newton *Free Press*, June 18, 1873; Belle Plaine *Union*, July 17, 1873; Webster City *Hamilton Freeman*, July 2, 1873.

<sup>18</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Sept. 18, 1873.

lists gathered in state convention in August, 1873, leading Democrats were entering the party in large numbers, not as followers but as managers. Having failed to win an election in Iowa since 1853, they were searching frantically for a winning platform. Tarred with the brush of "Copperheadism," the party had found the going heavy at election time. In spite of that, however, about one-third of Iowa's voters had remained loyal to the Democrats: the party had polled a peak of 43 per cent of the vote in 1865; the Democratic-Liberal Republican combination had won 36 per cent of the votes in 1872. The agrarian unrest of 1873 gave the Democrats a golden opportunity for victory, but they still approached the issue with caution. In spite of the fact that they prided themselves on being the party of Jefferson, postwar Democrats in the North had fallen under the dominance of the Bourbon element whose interests were far from agrarian.<sup>19</sup> Even in Iowa, a predominantly agricultural state, this was true.

Bourbon Democrats, no less than Republicans, had profited by the new industrial revolution of the postwar years. A laissez faire economy, in which the government kept hands off the developing industries of the East and North, suited them just as much as it did the Republicans. From the Middle West there could have come, under the fostering hand of the Democrats, a united protest against the imbalance of the American economy. As the prosperity of the war years receded, and the hard times of the seventies dawned, the farmers were seeking a way out of their economic doldrums. But instead of capitalizing on this discontent, the Bourbon Democrats made every effort to still the voice of agrarian discontent within their party. "After thirty years, though they had won but few elections, they could boast success in their main purpose—that of keeping farmers and wage earners from effective control of the Democratic party," is the judgment of Horace Merrill in his recent study of Middle Western Democracy.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, in Iowa, when it looked as though the farmers might develop a political machine of their own, the Democrats moved in, gave lip service to the antimonopoly planks in the platform, and within two elections had destroyed the movement. The farmers, as Clarkson had warned, lost control of the machinery of the party almost at once. They had no strong voice to speak for them, no firm political hand to manipulate the party in

<sup>19</sup> Horace Samuel Merrill, *Bourbon Democracy of the Middle West, 1865-1896* (Baton Rouge, La., 1953).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

their interest. Into the void stepped John P. Irish, Democratic editor of the *Iowa City Press* and chairman of the Democratic state central committee.

Irish was one of the prominent Democrats of the state and the favorite whipping boy of the Republicans, who never let slip a chance to ridicule him. A native of Iowa City, Irish had become editor of the *Iowa City Press* at the age of twenty-one, and through his paper he had grown powerful in the Democratic party. He had served several terms in the state legislature, but had failed in a bid for Congress in 1868. The editorial warfare in Iowa City between Irish's *Press* and Nathan H. Brainerd's *Republican* was a classic in political vituperation. Although the "Prospectus" of the *Iowa City Press* was a standard Jeffersonian document, Irish's loyalties were not always those of the father of his party. True, he preached the "good old Jefferson maxim, 'The Greatest Good to the Greatest Number'"; he cried "Down with the pretension that railroads are above the people's control" and "Let us return to the 'Farmer Republic'";<sup>21</sup> but in practice his control of the Anti-Monopoly movement destroyed its agrarian principles. By 1874 the Anti-Monopoly platform came out for states' rights, hard money, and free trade, strange doctrines for Middle Western farmers.

For some months before the August convention of the Anti-Monopolists, Irish had been sidling up to the Grangers. When the State Grange held its annual meeting in Des Moines in January of 1873 he had sent glowing reports to his paper at Iowa City of the "sturdy, clear-headed and full blooded farmers" who attended the meeting. "They remind me of a Democratic State Convention," he wrote, "they are the same elements."<sup>22</sup> At the same time an editorial from the pen of Irish under the caption "What Remedy?" must have pleased the farmers:

Subordinate the monied corporations, is the remedy for the evil times. Let banks, rail roads and manufacturers stand their chances, as the people have to stand theirs. Don't hedge around and fence in with law and protection the monied men and leave the masses bare and shorn. . . . So long as the people suffer themselves to be kept talking, thinking and voting about negro politics, so long will wealth accumulate and men decay. Say what you please about it, the elder Democracy was the party of the people. Its issues were

<sup>21</sup> From "Prospectus" which appeared in issues of the *Iowa City Press*, during 1873. For sketch of Irish, see Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . . (4 vols., New York, 1903), 4:142-3.

<sup>22</sup> *Iowa City Press*, Jan. 29, 1873.



made up of those matters that were of fireside interest to every laborer. Its talk was of tariffs, its hand struck monopoly full in the face, its currency was specie and its corruptions were few. The policy of the Republican party is perfectly plain to every thoughtful man. It puts on the thumb-screws for the corporations. Its legislation is in their interest. Its judicial decisions are for their benefit. All this for the purpose of burdening the people to an extent that will force them to consent to the absorption by the Federal government of the rail roads and telegraph lines, to be run by government officers as a part of their political machinery. It is the policy of the papers of that party to keep prating about the war, treason, loyalty and other unmeaning things of no application to our present condition. . . . So it goes; with the fire that warms, the food that feeds and the cloth that clothes the people every year costing more and more, while the tax cuts like a cancer. While fiscal officers are stealing themselves rich, while the corporations are mangling the fortunes and filching the livelihood of the people, we are respectfully requested in default of anything better to eat, to go on mumbling "loyalty," "victory," "battles," and "war." Excuse us. The men who fought us openly in the field were better and braver men than the crew that is picking our pockets stealthily and in the dark.<sup>23</sup>

This was Irish at his best, and it sounded like good Anti-Monopoly doctrine. When he appeared at the state convention in August, the farmers welcomed him with open arms. Unfortunately for them, Irish's future efforts were concentrated on destroying Republicans rather than monopolists.

For weeks before that convention met, the Republican papers had been full of charges that the new party would be taken over by the Democrats and the "renegade" Republicans who had joined the Liberal movement of 1872. They pointed to the number of Democrats and Liberal Republicans who had managed the various local conventions which were a prelude to the state gathering.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the Democrats were giving them some excuse for this attitude; hints of an abandonment of the Democratic label kept cropping up in the papers published in the interests of that party. In Clinton, even Judge Edward H. Thayer, editor of the *Clinton Age*, one of the leading Democrats of the state and a strong Bourbon at that, admitted that his party might have to combine with the Anti-Monopolists.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 4, 1873.

<sup>24</sup> *Des Moines Register*, June 8, 1873; *Belle Plaine Union*, July 17, 1873; *Newton Free Press*, June 18, 1873.



A native of Maine, Thayer had studied medicine and law, been admitted to the bar, and had risen to a judgeship in Muscatine County before turning to journalism. He had established the *Clinton Age* in 1868 and had made it one of the leading Democratic papers in the state. He was a strong and loyal party man, having been a delegate to practically every national convention since 1860 and the party's nominee for Congress in 1862 (an election he lost to Republican Hiram Price). Among his many activities was that of railroad promotion; for a time he had served as president of the Iowa Southwestern Railroad Company. This background hardly fitted in with the Anti-Monopoly agitation, but on July 4 Thayer wrote in his paper: "We understand it is the determination of the Democratic Executive Committee to issue no call for a State Convention this season. Certainly this plan gives any other organized opposition to the Republican party a free field to operate in. While we prefer a convention, we submit to the wisdom of the committee."<sup>25</sup> In the light of this statement, over a month before the Anti-Monopoly convention, Irish's public "burial" of the Democratic party at that gathering should not have been the surprise it seemed to be to many.

A week later Thayer again reported on the situation. Democrats all over the state were now ready to abandon their party, he claimed. If a new party should arise, strong enough to defeat the Republicans, "then the abandonment will be complete." But a new party must make more than a show of opposition; if it really means business, then "the whole rank and file of the Democratic party will go to the polls with the word Democratic erased from their tickets."<sup>26</sup>

Still another week later Thayer repeated these statements, but warned the farmers and Grangers to beware of "the old Republican stagers" who would try to fool them. "Men who can't tell a hay-rake from a milking stool, or a Durham heifer from a monkey wrench" were now courting the farmers with letters dated "On the farm near—." Beware of these men, thundered Thayer; they are merely "playing Granger" for their own benefit. Undecided at first about the Anti-Monopoly movement, Thayer now claimed to have come around to accepting it. "Go where you can do the most good," he advised the Democrats, and then added a most illuminating sentence: "Then when all of us shall have tired of running after strange gods, we have

<sup>25</sup> *Clinton Age*, July 4, 1873. For a biographical sketch of Thayer, see Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:261.

<sup>26</sup> *Clinton Age*, July 11, 1873.

no doubt we shall return to the inimitable principles of Democracy, no matter what may be the name of the organization which shall carry the old banner.”<sup>27</sup>

After the Anti-Monopoly state convention, Thayer, untroubled by the virtues of consistency, astonished his readers by completely reversing his position. “We never in our political experience,” he wrote, “knew of a more unwise or mischievous step to be taken by any party” than the abandonment by the Democrats of their own organization. The Anti-Monopoly party was not a Grange movement, he claimed, but actually in opposition to the Grange. Furthermore, he did not like the name “Anti-Monopoly” because it meant nothing. Everybody was opposed to monopolies, said Thayer, and you cannot build a party on such a platform. The best method for controlling monopolies is “more capital instead of less.” You do not make war on monopolies by making war on capital, but by “encouraging competition and elevating labor.” “Democrats, certainly, have no business in such an organization,” he continued. “Let them stand aloof, keep their organization intact, and we predict the time is not far distant when to preserve the material interests of the West, to restore confidence and prevent general bankruptcy, the time-honored Democracy will be asked to take the helm.” In another column Thayer wrote on “Rail-Road Securities in Iowa,” claiming that the Grangers could not hurt the railroads, but they could slow up things by their talk.<sup>28</sup>

Admittedly, it is difficult to follow or explain Thayer’s changes. On July 4 he had admitted “the wisdom of the committee” in not calling a Democratic convention; on August 22, after Irish had proclaimed the death of Democracy at the Anti-Monopoly convention, Thayer denied the power of the state committee to disband the party, washed his hands of the whole thing, and promised not to “refer to this subject again.” This promise was not particularly binding, however, for in the very column in which he declared his political independence, he printed and endorsed a call from the Dubuque *Telegraph* for a state Democratic convention, suggesting that such a meeting be held in Des Moines on September 17.<sup>29</sup>

Some Democrats were not so undecided, either one way or the other, about the movement as was Thayer. David N. Richardson of the Davenport

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, July 18, 1873.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 8, 1873.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 22, 1873.

Democrat had welcomed the call for an Anti-Monopoly convention, even though it was not made in the name of the party he "delighted" to honor. He foresaw "certain good" in its success and concluded that it was "non-sense to talk about strict party lines, when the whole West is in a state of ferment and the waters of the great deep are broken up." A week later he was "quite willing to enter into a league offensive and defensive" against the Republicans.<sup>30</sup> That the Anti-Monopolists wanted a league against monopoly and not especially against Republicans did not bother Richardson.

On the other hand, the Democratic Dubuque *Herald* strongly opposed killing off the party, claiming that it "is as thoroughly alive to-day as it ever was, though in a minority." While admitting that antimonopoly was a part of the Democratic principle, the editor insisted that Democracy was "far more than a mere anti-monopoly or grange movement." He called for a Democratic convention as such: "A minority party is better than no party." Irish spoke only for himself, not for the party, continued the editor, and if the party followed him it would regret it. In Johnson County the Republican editor took pleasure in printing a letter from LeGrand Byington, a stubborn Democrat who had refused to pay taxes to support a war he considered unjust and had thereby lost much of his property. Byington, who was in Kansas at the time, considered Irish a "blatant political rake" who had "begged his way into the chairmanship of [the Democratic] imbecile state committee," and he hoped that Irish would now stay where he belonged, "outside of the party which he has habitually betrayed."<sup>31</sup>

In Ottumwa the editor of the Democratic paper, Sam B. Evans, vehemently denied that the Democratic party was dead. Even if the committee had "abandoned the field," there were still plenty of Democrats who would not follow them in their "base surrender." Evans then called for a meeting of the Wapello County Democrats on September 6; "if you choose to die, do so in a decent and orderly manner. Surrender if you will, but take the responsibility on your own shoulders." Accordingly, the Wapello County Democrats met and "died" legally, or at least declared a cessation of activity by agreeing not to name candidates and to "place their votes where they will do the most good." Evans made the best of this, praising their action

<sup>30</sup> Davenport *Democrat*, July 10, 17, 1873.

<sup>31</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, Aug. 14, 1873, quoted in Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 19, 1873; Iowa City *Republican*, Sept. 10, 1873. For Byington, see Robert Rutland, "The Copperheads in Iowa: A Re-Examination," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 52:7-8 (January, 1954).



as showing independence and interest only in the good of the country. Rather than be accused of favoring monopolies by opposing the Anti-Monopoly party, they "withdrew from the contest, and will make the decisive charge at the right moment." Evans had not liked the nominations of the Anti-Monopoly state convention, had criticized Irish for his action, and had now come to the conclusion that although he did not like it, he would probably have to vote the Anti-Monopoly ticket, meanwhile maintaining his independence, "with strong tendencies to Democracy."<sup>32</sup>

In Dubuque County the Democrats met and passed a resolution condemning Irish for his action, which was "unwarranted, unauthorized, indiscreet, and in our opinion prejudicial to the best interests of the party." The editor of the Dubuque *Herald* praised this resolution and called for allegiance to the party and its principles, concluding with an attack on Irish and a plea for a real Democratic state convention. Another Dubuque Democrat, Dennis A. Mahony, also called for a state convention and criticized Irish for his "egotistical eccentricities."<sup>33</sup> It would seem that most of the top Democrats objected not so much to what Irish had done as to Irish himself.

In all this political unrest and name calling, little attention was any longer given to the agrarian protest which had been the basis of the Anti-Monopoly party. Democratic and Republican charges flew back and forth, with side issues threshed out within each party. Factionalism was in evidence everywhere. The Anti-Monopoly convention had convened against this background of charge and countercharge within both parties. Clarkson pointed out that if this were really a farmers' party they had chosen a very poor time for their convention — right in the middle of harvest. Either the "self-constituted managers" did this on purpose, in order to keep the farmers at home, or as an excuse for the lack of farmer attendance. "There's a political trick in this matter, or else an inexcusable ignorance of the farmer's calendar," concluded Clarkson.<sup>34</sup>

For a time the Republicans forgot their intraparty fights and concentrated their attention and their ridicule on the new party. "It was weak in conception, illegitimate in birth, and hasn't grown any since it was born," was Clarkson's conclusion. Only some 36 of the then 102 counties in Iowa were

<sup>32</sup> Ottumwa *Democrat*, Aug. 21, Sept. 11, 1873.

<sup>33</sup> Dubuque *Herald*, quoted in Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 20, 1873; Mahony quoted in *ibid.*, Aug. 21, 1873.

<sup>34</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 12, 1873.



represented, and Clarkson declared that some of these delegations were self appointed. Also, according to Clarkson, the "ring" that dominated the activities was made up of John P. Irish, Josiah B. Grinnell of Poweshiek County, Ed Campbell of Jefferson, James M. Tuttle of Van Buren, James Savery of Polk, Harvey Dunlavy of Davis, Samuel Sinnett of Muscatine, R. R. Harbour of Mahaska, "and others." Of this ring, the Republicans with one accord singled out a few for special attention: Irish, of course, whose editorial policy was singularly malicious and had earned him a host of enemies; Grinnell, the ex-Republican whose failure to defend himself against a public caning in Washington by an irate Kentucky Congressman was constantly harped on by his opponents; Campbell, who had been Democratic state chairman for some ten years and who, incidentally, would align himself with the Gold Democrats in 1896 in protest against the nomination of William Jennings Bryan; and Tuttle, whose brilliant record in the Civil War had raised him to the rank of brigadier general, but who had been a Democratic candidate for governor in 1863, and thus had placed himself beyond the pale, in Republican eyes.<sup>35</sup>

The Anti-Monopoly convention was called to order by M. L. Devin, treasurer of the State Grange and chairman of the Anti-Monopoly state committee. Temporary chairman was R. R. Harbour of Mahaska County, while the permanent chairmanship went to Henry W. Lathrop of Johnson County. Lathrop's presence at the convention must have been a shock to the Republicans. A former editor of the *Iowa City Republican*, Lathrop had been one of the founders of the Republican party in 1856. He had sold his newspaper and devoted his time and attention to farming, to the State Historical Society as librarian, and to writing. He had also been active in the founding of railroads in eastern Iowa.<sup>36</sup> His background should have given the Democrats the opportunity to complain of Republican and railroad infiltration of the Anti-Monopoly movement, but his role was evidently slight and he remained free from the newspaper attacks reserved for other members of the convention.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 13, 1873. For report of convention from Republican point of view, see *ibid.*, Aug. 14, 1873. For Grinnell, see Charles E. Payne, *Josiah Bushnell Grinnell* (Iowa City, 1938); and for the most recent interpretation of the caning affair, see Sage, "William B. Allison and Iowa Senatorial Politics," 116. For Campbell and Tuttle, see Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:40-41, 269-70.

<sup>36</sup> For Lathrop, see Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:163-4; for his railroad activities, see "Source Material of Iowa History: The Davenport & Iowa City Rail Road," *Iowa Journal of History*, 49:257-67 (July, 1951).

A hint that the real agrarian protest was pretty much ignored is seen in the treatment of Porte C. Welch of Mahaska County, a former Democratic editor who had been championing reform since 1869. According to a report in the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, the resolutions suggested by Welch "never saw daylight" but were shelved by Irish, who although not a delegate to the convention was active behind the scenes. During the convention, Welch's efforts to gain the floor were repeatedly ruled out of order by the chairman. Welch had renounced his allegiance to the Democratic party as early as 1870; now he demanded to know whether "this be a new party or a ghost of Democracy." Welch and Harbour, whose records of antimonopolism and reformism were older than those of many of the new converts, were pushed aside by the convention in Des Moines — another indication that political power and not agrarian reform was the real issue.<sup>37</sup>

When the time came for nominations for governor the name of Jacob W. Dixon, an Ottumwa lawyer, was shouted down vociferously because he was not a farmer. Three other names were presented: Jacob G. Vale of Van Buren County, an attorney and a former Republican; James Mathews of Knoxville, a farmer-lawyer and a Democrat; and Andrew Hastie of Warren County, a farmer. During the nominating speeches, and before the vote, a telegram from Vale was read to the convention. He would accept the nomination — if it was offered. Since his name had been endorsed by Ed Campbell, one of the "managers" of the convention, it would seem to indicate that the choice of the convention for the top office had been decided ahead of time. For some reason, Vale's profession of the law did not interfere with his choice, in contrast with the rejection of Dixon because he was a lawyer. Vale was nominated on the first ballot, although the farmer, Hastie, garnered a satisfactory number of votes in opposition.<sup>38</sup>

A suggestion that Hastie be nominated for lieutenant governor by acclamation — since he had run a close second to Vale — was quickly squelched by Campbell, who said "we farmers came up here to act deliberately." The

<sup>37</sup> *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, quoted in *Des Moines Register*, Aug. 30, 1873. For Welch's editorial policies, see *Oskaloosa Progressive Conservator*, Nov. 30, 1870; Feb. 23, June 1, 8, 29, 1871. For biographical sketch of Welch, and his newspaper career in Oskaloosa, see *History of Mahaska County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1878), 341-2, 723-6.

<sup>38</sup> *Des Moines Register*, Aug. 14, 1873; *History of Warren County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1879), 717; *History of Marion County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1881), 594-5; *History of Wapello County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1878), 566.

choice of the convention for lieutenant governor then went — promptly and with a minimum of “deliberation” — to Fred O'Donnell of Dubuque, lawyer and Democrat, by acclamation and with Campbell's blessing. The fact that O'Donnell was too young to serve if elected only came to light some three weeks after the convention, when he was forced to withdraw his name from the ticket.<sup>39</sup>

The two other places on the ticket were quickly filled. T. O. Walker of Bloomfield, another of the “managers,” and famous as a reading clerk at Democratic conventions because of his powerful voice, named B. J. Hall for the judgeship; while Campbell again found it necessary to step into the contest for superintendent of public instruction by brushing aside a suggested name because of the need of a “geographically balanced ticket.” D. W. Prindle of Fort Dodge, whom Governor Carpenter described as a “scrub” and a “sweet-scented reformer,” received the final nomination. “The firm of Irish & Campbell had planned well, and they executed well, too,” admitted Clarkson in the *Register*.<sup>40</sup>

Irish, while not a delegate to the convention, appeared after the nominations had been made and, as chairman of the Democratic state committee, declared his party dead and “hopelessly bankrupt,” having “outlived its day and its usefulness.” J. B. Grinnell also addressed the convention; his only bow to Anti-Monopoly being the statement that the greatest monopoly in the state was the Republican party. There were really no monopolies in the country, he assured the delegates, “but there is a growing tendency in that direction.” Railroads, on the other hand, were “great civilizers and improvers of the country, and we ask nothing of them but justice to our producers.”<sup>41</sup>

This must have sounded rather strange to a convention that had just adopted a platform calling for legislative control of the monopolies that Grinnell declared did not exist. Yet even that platform had a Democratic tinge. Whereas the Republicans asked for “congressional and legislative”

<sup>39</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 14, 1873; Belle Plaine *Union*, Sept. 4, 1873; Edward H. Stiles, *Recollections and Sketches of Notable Lawyers . . . of Early Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1916), 855-6. O'Donnell was replaced on the ticket by C. E. Whiting, a farmer of Monona County. Davenport *Democrat*, Oct. 1, 1873.

<sup>40</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 14, 1873; *History of Davis County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1882), 640-41; C. C. Carpenter to brother Emmett, Aug. 8, 1873; Carpenter Diary, Aug. 13, 1873, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>41</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 14, 1873.



control of railroad rates, the Anti-Monopolists asked for a divided control over the carriers — Congress to regulate the railroads it had created, the states to regulate those it had chartered.<sup>42</sup> This was good Democratic strict constructionist doctrine and virtually denied to Congress the right of control over interstate commerce, since the great majority of the nation's railroads operated on state charters. The Republican position, more realistic, would eventually result in the passage of the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887, during the Democratic administration of Grover Cleveland.

Hardly had the Anti-Monopoly convention adjourned than the Republican press began to heap scorn on its activities. In Iowa City, Nathan H. Brainerd of the *Republican* and Irish of the *Press* had long carried on one of the hottest editorial and political feuds in the state. Brainerd filled his columns for days with ridicule of Irish and Grinnell — “the two most notorious political prostitutes in Iowa” being one of his milder criticisms. Meservey of the *Fort Dodge Messenger* claimed that the convention was managed “by some of the most rickety old political hacks and heartless monopoly blatherskites in the country,” while in Belle Plaine the editor of the *Union* considered the whole movement a “decided failure.” Clarkson called the convention a “burlesque” and predicted a 60,000-vote majority for the Republicans in the coming election.<sup>43</sup>

The Democratic editors were of several minds. Dennis A. Mahony of the *Dubuque Telegraph* frankly admitted that the convention had been composed mostly of Democrats and Liberal Republicans, but asked “Why not? — hasn't the Democratic party always been opposed to monopolies?” Yet he also warned Democrats not to “approve nor accept as binding or final the course of Mr. Irish in this case.” Irish claimed that through the new party the “deathless principles of Jefferson” could now “reach the people through a purer channel and cleaner hands.” Judge Thayer, with chagrin, agreed with Clarkson's prediction of a 60,000-vote Republican majority in the fall, and disagreed with Mahony and Irish on Anti-Monopolism and Democracy: “the democracy are not in sympathy with the objects and purposes of the Anti-Monopoly party.” The Democratic *Dubuque Herald* viewed “Democracy differently” than did Mr. Irish, “or he would know that

<sup>42</sup> For Anti-Monopoly platform, see *Des Moines Register*, Aug. 14, 1873; Fairall, *Manual of Iowa Politics*, 92-3; for Republican platform, see *ibid.*, 90-92.

<sup>43</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, Aug. 20, 1873; *Fort Dodge Messenger*, Aug. 21, 1873; *Belle Plaine Union*, Aug. 21, 1873; *Des Moines Register*, Aug. 14, 1873.



it cannot die.”<sup>44</sup> Obviously, the Democrats of Iowa did not see eye to eye on the issues raised by Anti-Monopoly.

Governor Carpenter, who had been renominated by acclamation at the Republican state convention, was not at first much worried by his opposition. Before the Anti-Monopoly convention he had not regarded the movement as dangerous; after the convention he considered it a “forlorn hope.” For Carpenter’s running mate the Republicans, after briefly toying with the idea of choosing Dudley W. Adams as a sop to the Grangers, had nominated Joseph Dysart of Tama County. This in itself was a concession to the agitation against monopolies. Carpenter’s first lieutenant governor had been Henry C. Bulis, an avowed railroad man who, as president of the state Senate, had opposed railroad bills in the 1872 legislature. His presence on the ticket in 1873 would have done much to weaken the Republican cause; therefore he was replaced by Dysart, whose record in the Senate had been distinctly on the side of railroad regulation.<sup>45</sup>

The Republican claim that the Anti-Monopolists were dominated by the Democrats must be taken with a grain of salt, of course, as standard political tactics in dealing with the opposition. But the actions endorsed at the Anti-Monopoly convention, the platform adopted, and especially the 1874 history of the movement would seem to substantiate the Republican stand. From the date of the 1873 convention to the death of the party after the 1874 election, the movement became more and more Democratic and less and less a farmer-Granger agrarian revolt.

The campaign was rather a dull one. The Democratic protests of Thayer, Evans, and others against Irish and his faction of the party gradually died down. They reluctantly accepted the *fait accompli* and supported the Anti-Monopoly ticket with more or less enthusiasm. Locally, the Anti-Monopoly candidates were chosen for the legislature in many counties and districts. Here again Irish showed his hand by refusing to support an out-and-out Anti-Monopoly movement in his own county of Johnson. Instead, he called and ran a “Johnson County Convention” that was nothing but a Demo-

<sup>44</sup> Dubuque *Telegraph*, quoted in Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 21, 1873, and Fort Dodge *Messenger*, Aug. 14, 1873; Iowa City *Press*, Sept. 3, 1873; Clinton *Age*, Aug. 22, 1873; Dubuque *Herald*, Aug. 14, 1873, quoted in Des Moines *Register*, Aug. 19, 1873.

<sup>45</sup> C. C. Carpenter to brother Emmett, Aug. 8, 1873; Carpenter Diary, Aug. 13, 1873, *Carpenter Papers*. For Dysart, see Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:83; for Republican state convention, see Des Moines *Register*, June 26, 1873.

cratic party meeting in disguise. Brainerd explained this to his own satisfaction. Statewide, the Democrats had no chance, therefore Irish was willing to kill off the party and support Anti-Monopoly; locally, he saw a chance of success in Johnson County, traditionally Democratic — therefore, the party was still alive there. Do not be fooled by this “trickster,” Brainerd warned the Anti-Monopolists, but come over into the Republican party, “which is thoroughly in sympathy” with you.<sup>46</sup> Irish ignored the Anti-Monopolists in his home county, spoke of the “Free” convention at Des Moines, and insisted that the Democratic party “long years ago pioneered every principle that broadly underlies the Grange organization and was father to every declaration which can constitute a political issue in the platform of the Free Convention.”<sup>47</sup>

But a revolt was brewing in Irish’s own bailiwick. On September 20 a new paper appeared in Iowa City — the *Anti-Monopolist*, edited by J. G. Sehorn, deputy master of the Johnson County Grange and an active farmer. Sehorn, a native of Johnson County, had been a Democrat, but he denounced his former political allegiance in the “Prospectus” of his new paper and promised to publish “a progressive and aggressive Radical Reform Journal,” which would “war on corruption, fraud, fanaticism, political wire-working, demagouges [sic] and monopolies wherever found.”<sup>48</sup> Thus Irish found himself under attack both from the right and the left; from Brainerd who said Irish was still a Democrat, and from Sehorn, who insisted Irish was not an Anti-Monopolist.

On election day the Johnson County voters were faced with three tickets and, true to their Democratic traditions, they chose the men in the “Johnson County” column. Thus Irish won in his county, in spite of two outspoken opponents. Of interest, as showing the unsureness of the Anti-Monopoly-Democratic movement, is the fact that Irish’s choice for chairman of the Anti-Monopoly state convention, H. W. Lathrop, became one of the two Johnson County nominees on the Anti-Monopoly ticket. Lathrop evidently felt more at home in the frankly Anti-Monopoly ranks than in Irish’s disguised Democratic party.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Iowa City *Republican*, Aug. 27, 1873.

<sup>47</sup> Iowa City *Press*, Sept. 4, 1873.

<sup>48</sup> Iowa City *Anti-Monopolist*, Sept. 20, 1873. For sketch of Sehorn, see *History of Iowa County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1881), 536.

<sup>49</sup> For the three tickets, see Iowa City *Press*, Sept. 3, 1873; Iowa City *Anti-Monopolist*, Sept. 20, 1873; Iowa City *Republican*, Sept. 3, 1873.

As already indicated, many Democrats throughout the state found it difficult to accept Anti-Monopolism, and several calls went out for the convening of a Democratic state convention. But the calls were not answered; no leader or group seemed willing or able to rally the party. Gradually, some of the counties called conventions under various names, and candidates for the legislature were nominated on platforms calling for reform, railroad rate regulation, and opposition to the Republican regime.

The Republicans officially opened their canvass on September 17, and a desultory campaign ensued. They had much to explain away, and it was not easy. The scandals of the Grant regime were mounting; Congress had voted itself a pay increase at the last session which had brought down storms of protest from both parties and accusations of "salary grab" and "salary steal"; the Credit Mobilier affair of 1872 made excellent campaign material for the opposition, even though the expose touched men of both parties. In Iowa, the defalcation of the state treasurer, Samuel E. Rankin, who had stolen some \$38,000 of the Agricultural College funds, was grist for the Democratic mill. Although the governor had emerged from the Rankin scandal without blemish, some Democratic papers tried to wring what political profit they could from it. Carpenter, growing uneasy, wrote in his diary on the eve of the canvass: "I have never gone out to speak with such a feeling of dread as I have this year. It seems almost impossible to awaken in my own mind anything like an interest in the crooked politics of this year. Too much claptrap."<sup>50</sup> R. H. Dutton, secretary of the Republican state central committee had written the governor in August: "The course of Donnan on Back Pay & Bullis [sic] & Bemis on R R question last winter has been very demoralizing. Our speakers are very much loth to take the field this year, and we shall have hardly enough to make an effective canvass of Six weeks but by putting them all in for a month can make it lively." Republican Chairman A. H. Neidig found it necessary to make a personal visit to ex-Governor Kirkwood at Iowa City, to "endeavor to induce him to take part in the canvass."<sup>51</sup>

It had been hard work to stir up the speakers, but the campaign opened on schedule with enough big names on the roster of speakers to make a proper showing. John A. Kasson, the stormy petrel of Polk County politics,

<sup>50</sup> Carpenter Diary, Sept. 15, 1873, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>51</sup> R. H. Dutton to Carpenter, Aug. 8, 13, 1873; A. H. Neidig to Carpenter, Aug. 1, 9, 1873, *ibid.*



invaded Irish's home grounds at Iowa City and discussed congressional powers over interstate commerce, thus going at once to the heart of the real conflict between the two parties in the campaign — whether Congress or the states should attempt to regulate railroads. George W. McCrary of Keokuk, who had served in the House from Iowa's first district since 1869, spoke on the same theme in Iowa City a few days later. As chairman of the committee on railroads in the House, McCrary had prepared a report on the constitutional powers of Congress in dealing with interstate railroads, and he pointed out that the support for his report had come from the Republicans, the opposition from Democrats. "Can there be any question," he asked, "that the Republican party, in maintaining the doctrine that Congress has this power is, after all, the best Anti-Monopoly party?"<sup>52</sup>

Governor Carpenter concentrated his attention on the Grange. He spoke constantly before Grange gatherings, and many would have to admit later that it was his personal popularity, his record of honesty in office, and his known stand in favor of governmental control of railroads that carried the party to victory. In his first inaugural he had stated flatly that he did "not regard the pretense that railways are beyond the control of law, in respect to fare and freights, as worthy of more than a moment's consideration."<sup>53</sup> In January of 1873 the governor had made an address at the annual meeting of the State Agricultural Society, an address which helped to enhance his popularity with the farmers. In this speech, afterwards known as the "skeleton" speech, he had referred to the "cost of exchanging commodities over long lines of communication, by expensive agencies, and at exorbitant charges for transportation" as the "skeleton in every Western farmer's corn-crib." The farmers were delighted with this somewhat ghoulish imagery, and the Republican newspapers of the state promptly fell in line and praised Carpenter in glowing terms. Clarkson of the *Register* wrote the governor, asking to publish the speech and suggesting that the *Iowa Homestead* also should publish it, "so it would reach more farmers, to the end that they may see we now have a governor who is awake to their interests."<sup>54</sup> Carpenter

<sup>52</sup> *Iowa City Republican*, Sept. 18, 24, 1873. For McCrary, see Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:174-5.

<sup>53</sup> Benjamin F. Shambaugh (ed.), *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa* (7 vols., Iowa City, 1903-1905), 4:20.

<sup>54</sup> James S. Clarkson to Carpenter, Jan. 10, 1873, *Carpenter Papers*. Speech published in *Report . . . Iowa State Agricultural Society . . . 1872* (Des Moines, 1873), 194-216, and in *Des Moines Register*, Jan. 17, 1873.



continued to emphasize this theory, if not in so macabre a fashion, during the fall campaign, and left no doubt in the minds of his hearers that if re-elected he would strongly support state railroad regulation of the farmers' most hated monopoly, the railroads. It was good politics, and it paid off on election day.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Monopoly-Democrats seem to have carried on a weak campaign, dealing mostly with local issues rather than the state ticket. Candidate Vale made but little stir in the state, against the organized campaign put on by the Republicans. Locally, the strong Democratic papers concentrated on the personalities of the candidates for the legislature and their opposing editors, the theory evidently being that if you could accuse your opponent often enough of being a liar, you could thereby win votes for your side. Irish ignored the state ticket and filled the columns of his paper with attacks on the editors of the *Republican* and the *Anti-Monopolist*, both of whom replied in kind. Actually, the Republican papers gave more attention to the real issue of the campaign — railroad regulation — than did the Democratic editors. Antimonopoly, as a phase of the agrarian revolt, was almost ignored by those who had adopted its name if not its principles.

In spite of a weak campaign, however, the various tickets parading under the Anti-Monopoly standard made a surprisingly strong showing. When the votes were all in, it was found that although the Republicans had carried the state offices, by a reduced majority it is true, and had maintained a good control of the state Senate, in the House of 100 members, 50 were Republicans and 50 Anti-Monopolist-Democrats. Publicly the Republicans tried to put the best face on the matter that they could, but privately Dutton and Neidig congratulated Carpenter "that the matter is no worse."<sup>55</sup> In 1871 the Republican ticket had carried by a 40,000 majority; in 1873 Carpenter was re-elected by about a 26,000 majority.<sup>56</sup> Whereas in 1871 only seven counties (Allamakee, Dubuque, Jackson, Johnson, Lee, Audubon, and Fremont) had given a Democratic majority, in 1873 twenty-five counties preferred Vale to Carpenter. In the 1872 legislature the Democrats had had only one-quarter of the 100 votes in the House; now they and the Anti-Monopolists had exactly one-half. For the first time since the Civil War, the organization of the Iowa House of Representatives was in question.

<sup>55</sup> R. H. Dutton to Carpenter, Oct. 17, 1873, *Carpenter Papers*.

<sup>56</sup> Fairall, *Manual of Iowa Politics*, 88, 93.

Geographically, the Anti-Monopoly vote was concentrated in the southern half and in the eastern third of the state. The northwestern quarter of Iowa, where railroads were still needed, significantly sent only two reform candidates to the House, one from traditionally-Democratic Webster County, and one from a district comprised of five thinly-populated counties on the western slope.<sup>57</sup> Significantly, also, the only House votes cast against railroad regulation came from this section. The four men who represented sixteen northwestern counties — all Republicans — opposed the law.<sup>58</sup>

In the Senate, 27 of the 50 districts in the state had holdover Senators — elected in 1871 for a four-year term. Of these, 6 were Democrats. In the remaining 23 districts, the Anti-Monopoly opposition elected 10 members.<sup>59</sup> As in the case of the House, the opposition Senators were located in southern and eastern Iowa, with the entire western slope and most of north-central Iowa loyal to the Republicans. On the crucial vote on the railroad regulation, only 9 Senators voted against it — 6 of them holdover Republicans, one a holdover Democrat, and the remaining 2 newly-elected Republicans. Geographically, four Senators from the western slope opposed railroad control, the other five being holdovers from scattered eastern counties.<sup>60</sup>

Both sides tried to “explain” the election. Of course the Democratic newspapers were jubilant. They foresaw great things in the future. The Republican majority had fallen; perhaps by the next election it would fall even further and give the Democrats (by whatever name) a complete victory in the state. Irish called it a revolt against the Republican party — another indication that his interpretation of the times was political rather than economic. “On our side,” he wrote, “the campaign has conducted itself.” The people “instinctively” supported the opposition parties, said Irish. “Let now the new party be cemented and its organization perfected.”<sup>61</sup> Irish, who had done little, editorially, to support the state ticket, was now ready to cash in on its victory.

<sup>57</sup> *House Journal*, 1874, 6-7. The politics of the members, not listed in the *Journal*, has been deduced from the vote for Speaker, p. 9.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 404-405.

<sup>59</sup> See *Laws of Iowa*, 1874 (section on Private, Local, and Temporary Acts), vii-viii, for members of the Senate. Politics of members compiled from comments in *Des Moines Register* following October election, and from votes as recorded in *Senate Journal*, 1874, *passim*.

<sup>60</sup> *Senate Journal*, 1874, 295.

<sup>61</sup> *Iowa City Press*, Oct. 16, 1873.

The Republican editor of the *Keokuk Gate City* had various explanations for the election. It was the natural reaction from the large majority of 1872, he claimed, when the state had given Grant a 60,000 majority; the American people do not like to give any party "too immense a majority persistently," so they like to try another party once in a while. His most surprising conclusion was that there had been no "great issue" in the campaign, to bring out the vote.<sup>62</sup> Granted, neither side had played the antimonopoly theme too strongly, preferring to conduct the campaign in the time-honored tradition of personal vilification for the opponents, but to the farmer, harassed by high prices, the phrase Anti-Monopoly must have seemed a real issue.

The Democratic editors who had been suspicious of the Anti-Monopoly movement, and who had regretted the seeming demise of their own party, now saw the light and quickly joined in praising the new party. Thayer said that the election meant "a new deal all around. . . . Old things have passed away, and new things are in order."<sup>63</sup> Evans, of the *Ottumwa Democrat*, gave a bow to the Anti-Monopoly movement in his surrender:

The time has come when the people must league together for mutual protection, and we speak in the name and for thousands of Democrats, pledging ourselves that hereafter we will join cordially with any set of men in putting down the monstrous usurpations of the railroad companies. They are, as they now stand, the greatest enemies against the prosperity and happiness of the people. They are selfish and self-important.

Evans had a personal reason for lashing out at the railroads, for he claimed that they had sent voters into Ottumwa to swing the election to the Republicans.<sup>64</sup> But whatever his reason, Evans' attack on the railroads was what the farmers wanted to hear, and what they did not hear from most of the other Democratic editors.

Clarkson of the *Des Moines Register* was wiser than most of the Democrats in judging the issues of the election. In an editorial titled "Redeem the Republican Pledge," he pointed out that the one great issue before the next legislature was the regulation of railroad rates. This the election had proved; this both parties had promised. He hastened to reassure the voters

<sup>62</sup> *Keokuk Gate City*, Oct. 22, 1873.

<sup>63</sup> *Clinton Age*, Oct. 24, 1873.

<sup>64</sup> *Ottumwa Democrat*, Oct. 16, 23, 30, 1873.



about the so-called holdover Senators from the previous session, claiming that they would certainly uphold such legislation, that if they had opposed it in the past it was merely because the laws presented had not been "fair and equitable."<sup>65</sup> Clarkson, promising that the Republicans would redeem their pledge and pass a regulatory act to protect the people from monopoly, thus strove to steal the Anti-Monopoly thunder and put in a claim, ahead of time, for fulfilling the demands of the electorate.

When the legislature met in Des Moines in January, 1874, there was, thus, no question but that railroad tariff regulation would pass. A long deadlock over organizing the evenly divided House was finally resolved by allowing the Republicans the Speaker, and the House settled down to work. Meanwhile, Democrats throughout the state were laying plans for the 1874 congressional elections with high hopes. N. M. Ives of Ottumwa, a former Democrat who was chairman of the Anti-Monopoly state central committee, opened the new year with a call to the "Friends of Reform." The time has come, he said, to "crystalize" the new movement against the "bold bad men who compose the legions of monopoly," and he called a state convention for February 25. Evans of the Ottumwa *Democrat*, still not able to accept the term "Anti-Monopoly," heartily endorsed Ives's call for what Evans called a "Free party" convention, while Thayer of the Clinton *Age*, who shared Evans' distaste for the name, christened the movement the "People's Party." "This call is broad enough for everybody," he claimed. "We see no reason why the Democracy of the State cannot ally itself with the element which set on foot the new party, and by thus joining forces secure success at the polls." Irish endorsed the call "unhesitatingly and without reserve."<sup>66</sup>

A sour note came from Sehorn of the Iowa City *Anti-Monopolist*, however. In the call he saw an attempt to turn the movement over "to the chief fuglemen and political demagogues [sic] of the dead Democracy." Sehorn believed that the Anti-Monopoly party already had an organization; why, then, should a new meeting be called? If they just wanted to reorganize the "dead Democracy," he would have none of it.<sup>67</sup>

This presaged a squabble in Johnson County, one of the few strong-

<sup>65</sup> Des Moines *Register*, Oct. 30, 1873.

<sup>66</sup> Ottumwa *Democrat*, Jan. 1, 1874; Clinton *Age*, Jan. 9, 1874; Iowa City *Press*, Jan. 7, 1874. For Ives, see *History of Wapello County*, 578-9.

<sup>67</sup> Iowa City *Anti-Monopolist*, Jan. 17, 1874.



holds of the Democratic party in Iowa. Two conventions were held, one called by Irish, one called by Sehorn and his brand of Anti-Monopolists, and both conventions sent delegates to Des Moines. Only a compromise between the two delegations, engineered by Irish, kept this intraparty battle from breaking out on the convention floor.<sup>68</sup>

The *Register*, after calling the convention respectable, dignified, and well attended, went on to classify it as dominated by "old-time Democrats," carefully listing the leading men of the supposedly dead party who had been in attendance. It was a "brigade of old Bourbons," with a small sprinkling of former Republicans. Further to show that the convention had been run by the Democrats, Clarkson cited, first, the "Democratic game of kicking out half of the Anti-Monopoly delegation from Johnson county," and, second, "the pure Democratic essence of the platform."<sup>69</sup> Even discounting the political animus of the Republicans in searching for every excuse to tar the new party with the brush of Democracy, Clarkson's comments on the platform cannot be ignored.

Aside from the usual clauses viewing with alarm the present condition of affairs under the Republican party, the convention "recognized" a monopoly in the protective tariff and called for the old Democratic principle of a tariff for revenue only; secondly, it repeated and emphasized its previous stand on the powers of Congress and the state legislatures in controlling corporations. Here the Democratic principle of states' rights came to the fore. Railroads, said the platform, were necessary and should be encouraged, but they should pay a fair share of the taxes and should charge "no more than a just and equitable rate for transportation and travel."<sup>70</sup>

Thayer, the reluctant Anti-Monopolist, considered the platform "the most sensible set of resolutions" he had ever read. It would do "a vast amount of good in the way of satisfying capital that it will be as free from unfriendly legislation, in Iowa, as in any State in the Union." This was strange doctrine to the Anti-Monopolist, who considered "capital" his natural enemy. Thayer still did not like the name of the party, "because it is entirely meaningless as applied to politics," but he agreed to support the party on its adopted platform.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *Iowa City Press*, March 4, 1874.

<sup>69</sup> *Des Moines Register*, Feb. 27, 1874.

<sup>70</sup> *Ottumwa Democrat*, March 5, 1874.

<sup>71</sup> *Clinton Age*, March 6, May 1, 1874.

Meanwhile, the legislature was wrestling with a number of bills purporting to "regulate" Iowa's railroads. In the Senate railroad committee some half dozen bills were combined into one catchall, which passed with little or no opposition. When the bill reached the House it was found to be "so crude and grossly full of error" that it had to be rewritten. The House committee of twenty-three members — twelve Republicans and eleven Anti-Monopolists — held hearings, listened to the railroad lobby, asked the Grange for advice, and finally brought in a bill of elaborate and weighty proportions. Following a lengthy and wrangling debate and an unsuccessful effort by Dixon of Wapello County to rewrite the bill on the floor, the measure passed with but four nay votes. The opponents took occasion to explain their votes, three claiming economic or constitutional objections, while one justified his vote "because he believed there was a hereafter."<sup>72</sup>

Reaction to the passage of the "Granger law" was varied. Clarkson was cautious in his appraisal of the work of the legislators. They had honestly tried to do their best, he wrote, and if the law fails "it will prove an honest failure." The Burlington *Hawk-Eye* hoped that the law would prevent the "ruinous discrimination" against various business centers in the state. In northwestern Iowa, where railroads were still needed, the Estherville *Vindicator* saw "naught of encouragement to either the farming or mercantile interests of north-western Iowa" in the bill. Brainerd of the Iowa City *Republican* was mildly optimistic: the bill had been drawn with great care, but no doubt defects would appear, once the law went into effect on July 4. He hoped it would result in a "more satisfactory relationship between the railroads and the people."<sup>73</sup> Surprisingly, neither the *Press* nor the *Anti-Monopolist* of Iowa City commented on the passage of a law which had been the basis of the Anti-Monopoly movement.

While the bill had been before the legislature Irish had come out in its favor, but took occasion to insist that only the state could regulate freight charges and that Congress had no power over state-chartered railroads. The Republican claim that regulation was up to Congress was, according to Irish, just so much "Administration and Monopoly nonsense." The Republican papers immediately took up the challenge. Clarkson, in an I-told-you-

<sup>72</sup> Keokuk *Gate City*, March 18, 1874; Des Moines *Register*, March 13, 1874.

<sup>73</sup> Des Moines *Register*, March 27, 1874; Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, April 2, 1874; Estherville *Northern Vindicator*, March 28, 1874; Iowa City *Republican*, March 18, 1874.

so attitude, pointed out that he had foreseen this "several months ago," and that "the old Democratic party's fealty to the doctrine of State Rights would lead it to the position that the Government had no right whatever to interfere with the railways or any other corporations." He was sure, he continued, that the Democrats had had this in mind when they took over the Anti-Monopoly party and "led it blind-fold to an union with the old doctrine of State Rights." In Congress, Iowa's McCrary had introduced an interstate commerce bill which was arousing considerable attention both locally and nationally. When the bill passed the House by a slim majority, the Republicans delighted in pointing out that the opposition had come entirely from the Democratic side of the House.<sup>74</sup> They repeatedly warned the Anti-Monopolists against the company they were keeping.

Evidence that some of the Anti-Monopolists were harking to the Republican warnings came even during the session of the legislature and the meeting of the Anti-Monopoly state convention. As early as February 11 a Republican, Moses A. McCoid of Jefferson County, had introduced into the Senate a resolution to the effect that it was the "right and duty" of Congress "to so regulate inter-State railway commerce as to prohibit extortion." This resolution passed the Senate unanimously, with all the Anti-Monopolists and Democrats in the chamber voting "aye." When the resolution reached the House it was put on its way to passage without much attention until, according to a Keokuk editor, "an old antiquated Democrat" saw the contradiction, said "he was not sure but that the bill was a trick of the pesky Republicans to circumvent State Rights," and asked that consideration be delayed. "The anti-Monops pricked up their ears, and said 'Amen.'" <sup>75</sup>

The delay seemed permanent until about a month later when Jacob W. Dixon, Anti-Monopolist from Wapello County — and the man the Anti-Monopolists had supported for Speaker — introduced a resolution calling for the "passage of a law by congress, regulating freights and fares on railroads in all cases where such regulation cannot be reached by the legislation of the several states." The House Anti-Monopolists immediately saw that the resolution did not completely jibe with their platform, and a prolonged debate took place. When the vote was taken, Dixon and eleven other

<sup>74</sup> *Iowa City Press*, Feb. 27, 1874; *Des Moines Register*, March 13, 24, 1874; *Iowa City Republican*, April 8, 1874.

<sup>75</sup> *Des Moines Register*, Feb. 20, 1874; *Keokuk Gate City*, Feb. 18, 1874; *Senate Journal*, 1874, 119.



Anti-Monopolists joined the Republicans in passing the resolution. The Republicans immediately took pains to point out that this looked like a serious break in the Anti-Monopoly ranks, and Brainerd invited Dixon "back to his old friends, where common sense rules, instead of exploded southern Democratic states rights theories."<sup>76</sup>

In the months before the Anti-Monopoly nominating convention, called for June 24, Irish carried on an editorial war with various Republican editors, a war in which he several times showed the Democratic — even the Bourbon Democratic — hand inside the Anti-Monopoly glove. He argued with Brainerd of the *Iowa City Republican* on the issue of congressional versus state control of railroads, and he was goaded by the *Belle Plaine Union* into taking a strong hard money stand, a very strange position for a leader in the farmers' movement which was steadily edging toward greenbackism as the new solution to hard times. Richardson of the *Davenport Democrat* was even more frankly a "Free Trade, Hard Money, Home Rule" man than Irish, while at the same time claiming adherence to the Anti-Monopoly cause. Such political schizophrenia can only be explained by Sam Evans' frank statement on the eve of the election: "We act with the Anti-Monopolists because that organization is in opposition to the Republican party, and its principles are essentially Democratic." Even before that revealing pronouncement, Thayer had disavowed any approval of the railroad tariff law, a law which had passed in 1874 and not before because the demand for it had brought the Anti-Monopoly party into being. But Thayer calmly stated that the "claim that the railroad tariff law is of Anti-Monopoly origin or is approved by the Anti-Monopoly party" was nonsense. "The Anti-Monops can stand a good many things, and not wince, but this new railroad law it cannot father and live."<sup>77</sup> The party had not "fathered" the law — that had been done as early as 1865 — but it had most certainly breathed life into it as the result of the 1873 election. Now leading Democrats proposed to carry on the party while disavowing the very issue which had given it birth.

In Ottumwa, Sam Evans, who had accepted Anti-Monopolism as the best

<sup>76</sup> *Des Moines Register*, March 13, 20, 1874; *Iowa City Republican*, March 11, 1874; *House Journal*, 1874, 421-2. For resolution, see *Laws of Iowa*, 1874, 86.

<sup>77</sup> *Iowa City Press*, March 25, April 8, 1874; *Iowa City Republican*, April 22, 1874; *Belle Plaine Union*, April 9, Oct. 1 (quoting *Ottumwa Democrat*), 1874; *Clinton Age*, Sept. 4, 1874; *Davenport Democrat*, quoted in *Des Moines Register*, May 8, 1874.



way to defeat the Republicans, and who had attended the February convention and helped write a hard money plank into the platform, continued to be restless under the new party label. When in May a meeting of Democrats at the Manhattan Club in New York called forth a number of letters extolling the virtues and the liveliness of the Democratic party, Evans published them with relish, pointing out that they indicated a great Democratic revival, that such protest parties as that in Iowa had merely been "the bridge which has carried us safely over the chasm," and that such "ephemeral organizations" as the Anti-Monopoly party could never have existed had it not been for the "grand old Democratic party." The *Register*, with tongue in cheek, congratulated Evans on his honesty.<sup>78</sup> The Republicans never lost a chance to warn the Anti-Monopolists against the Democratic infiltration of their ranks, no doubt preferring the continued existence of a party they could stigmatize with Civil War guilt, rather than a new organization against which bloody shirt oratory could not be used.

Thus was the agrarian protest of the farmers used by both sides to further their own political ends. The Republicans were, however, more intelligent politically in their acceptance of the farmers' program, in that they wrote it into their platforms and then proceeded to support it right down the line, even helping to pass the laws it demanded. The Democrats, on the other hand, merely used the unrest of the agrarian protest to try to hoist themselves back into office and power, with little or no intention of furthering the farmers' cause. Their platform, adopted at the state convention in June, did not even bother to pay the usual lip service to the farmers' demands but emerged as a typical Democratic program — a program which had small appeal to Iowa farmers. States' rights meant nothing to the Iowa farmer — in fact it smacked too much of Southern Democracy and the Civil War. Hard money was just what the farmer did not want; as the depression deepened he began to show more and more interest in increasing the number of greenbacks in circulation — a policy which the Democrats opposed vigorously. Iowa farmers had, on the whole, accepted the Republican belief in a high tariff as the source of America's wealth, and thus the Democratic plea for a tariff for revenue only could have little appeal.

Both parties in their platforms gave wary allegiance to the railroad tariff act of the 1874 General Assembly. Said the Republicans: the law should "be upheld and enforced until it shall be superseded by other legislation, or

<sup>78</sup> Ottumwa *Democrat*, May 21, 1874; Des Moines *Register*, June 5, 1874.

held unconstitutional by the proper judicial tribunal"; the Anti-Monopoly-Democrats wanted the law faithfully enforced "until experience may have demonstrated the propriety and justice of its modification."<sup>79</sup> Since the law had not even gone into effect when the parties held their conventions, this hedging and hesitancy shows either an uneasiness or a dissatisfaction about the legislation even before it had been tried. The politicians had accepted the demand for control of the railroads with a fairly good grace; when the tide turned, they would just as eagerly embrace the repeal of the law.<sup>80</sup> With the changing economic picture, the wise politician changed too; if he did not — and here lies the weakness of nineteenth century Iowa Democracy — he met defeat at the polls.

The state ticket for minor state offices nominated by the Anti-Monopoly party in 1874 was characterized by Clarkson as consisting of one farmer and five lawyers. In an effort to shake off what many considered the stigma of Anti-Monopoly, the convention had called itself the "Independent party of Iowa," but the original name still clung to the movement.<sup>81</sup>

Coker F. Clarkson, a Republican, a Granger, and a sincere agrarian, wrote a strong protest in his farm column in the *Register* against the "unhallowed" use of the farmers' name in the various reform parties which were mushrooming in the Middle Western states, under the guidance of "sore-head politicians."

In no sense are these farmer movements, and by no parity of reasoning should we be held responsible for their crude, ill-advised, contradictory platforms, with a plank in them to suit any faction, feeling, or sentiment of a congregation of hungry soreheads, or half-weaned treasury suckers. Generally these reform tickets are filled with lean and lank Bourbon Democrats, with a nobody Republican sandwiched in to catch gulls. And then to blanch an honest man's inmost soul with horror they call it a farmers' movement. Farmer! In thy name what unhallowed deeds are committed.<sup>82</sup>

To the Republicans, all Democrats were Bourbons, but within the Democratic party the Bourbon element represented only one faction of the mem-

<sup>79</sup> For platforms, see Fairall, *Manual of Iowa Politics*, 93-7.

<sup>80</sup> See Mildred Throne, "The Repeal of the Iowa Granger Law, 1878," *Iowa Journal of History*, 51:97-130 (April, 1953).

<sup>81</sup> Des Moines *Register*, July 3, 1874; Fairall, *Manual of Iowa Politics*, 95.

<sup>82</sup> Des Moines *Register*, June 26, 1874.

bership. This was the element that preferred Republican conservatism to Democratic progressivism and fought the members of its own party who called for a change to meet altering economic conditions. Even in the seventies some Democrats saw this split in their party. In 1875, when the Anti-Monopoly movement was dead for all practical or political purposes, Richardson of the *Davenport Democrat* lashed out at his fellow-Democrat Sam Evans: "Sam Evans is a Bourbon, he never forgets anything." Evans accepted the challenge — "We are a Bourbon, and proud of the name" — and reminded Richardson that "It was the most heroic act of the age when the Count de Chambord refused the French crown unless it was decorated with the lillies of France — the white flag of the legitimate Kings; the hereditary emblems which were nothing in themselves, yet powerful in the vindication of a principle."<sup>83</sup>

This split within the Democratic party was evidenced many times in the congressional district conventions which were held during the summer months of 1874 to name candidates for Congress. Sehorn of the *Iowa City Anti-Monopolist* found more fault with his party's nominations in some instances than he did with the Republican candidates. He saw the conflict within the Democratic ranks, and named Irish as a "simon pure democrat of the bourbon stripe." While Irish and others pretended to support the Anti-Monopoly party, said Sehorn, "they are secretly maintaining and nurturing the old Democratic organization into life and force as their party of the future." Irish, who publicly supported the Anti-Monopoly program, was "in secret collusion with the railroad and other monopolies of the State." How much of this is true, and how much may be attributed to local political animus, cannot of course be proved, but the very fact of the conflict points up the lack of harmony in the ranks of the protest movement. In Ottumwa, Jacob W. Dixon accused Evans of defeating him for the Anti-Monopoly congressional nomination and threatened dire consequences.<sup>84</sup> Faced with a well-managed Republican party, these internal quarrels boded no good for the opposition.

Meanwhile, the voters looked on, made up their minds, and went to the polls in October to destroy the so-called farmers' movement embodied in the Anti-Monopoly party. The margin of victory for the Republican state

<sup>83</sup> Ottumwa *Democrat*, July 29, 1875.

<sup>84</sup> Iowa City *Anti-Monopolist*, July 16, Oct. 8, 1874; Ottumwa *Democrat*, July 23, 1874.



ticket was below that of previous years, with the exception of 1873, but it was satisfactory. There was one fly in the ointment for the Republican congressional delegation — one Anti-Monopolist had slipped through, to spoil Iowa's solid Republican record. Lucien L. Ainsworth of West Union, a former Democrat, won election in the third district composed of Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Clayton, Winneshiek, and Allamakee counties.<sup>85</sup> Although elected as an Anti-Monopolist, Ainsworth voted with the Democrats during his term in Congress.

But one Congressman did not make a victory, or a party, and the Democrats began running for cover with unseemly haste. Two days after the election Evans wrote in an editorial headed "Emancipation Day": "On Tuesday, Oct. 13th the Democrats of Iowa closed their engagement with the Anti-Monopoly Troupe and on Wednesday Oct. 14th entered into business on their own account." Thayer was also relieved: "There seems to be a disposition all over the State to turn 'anti-monop' out to grass. This is wise. Such a name is enough to destroy any political organization. . . . Now let us come back to the good, old democratic organization. . . ." It was all the fault of an "ill-constructed platform," said Thayer a week later, evidently forgetting that in March he had called the preliminary platform "the most sensible set of resolutions" he had ever read. Irish's comment is perhaps the most amazing, considering the part he had played in taking the Democrats into the Anti-Monopoly party.

In the organization of the Anti-Monopoly party of Iowa, old political leaders had no part nor lot. The people concluded that for the purpose they desired to accomplish the Democratic party of Iowa was no longer useful and they consigned it to the limbo of undone things, and chose a new instrument of their own accord.

Sehorn admitted that the Anti-Monopoly party had been "a myth," and called for a "new and pure political workingmens party to save the country." By the spring of 1875, however, even Sehorn had surrendered, had left Iowa City, and had started publication of the *Marengo Democrat*.<sup>86</sup>

Porte Welch, who had long advocated reform movements within and without the Democratic party, tried to explain the latest setback. He con-

<sup>85</sup> For Ainsworth, see Gue, *History of Iowa*, 4:3.

<sup>86</sup> Ottumwa *Democrat*, Oct. 15, 1874; Clinton *Age*, March 6, Oct. 23, 30, 1874; Iowa City *Press*, Oct. 28, 1874; Iowa City *Anti-Monopolist*, Oct. 22, 1874; *History of Iowa County*, 536.



cluded that it was not "lack of merit" in the Anti-Monopoly party that had brought defeat, but rather the "class of political adventurers" who had left the Republicans and taken over control of the party. This excuse is not borne out by the facts, however, since most of the top men in the movement had been Democrats rather than Republicans. Welch was closer to the truth when he added that if the new party had really been that — "a new party in spirit and in truth, and not an old party with a new name" — then the movement might have been more successful. If the Democratic party is now reorganized, he warned, it must "make a new departure from the repeated follies of the past, and must define its position on every important issue of the times." The leaders must not only preach the principles of Jefferson, they must also practice them. Here Welch put his finger on the real weakness of the Democratic party in Iowa. At the convention in June the Anti-Monopolists had "dodged every prominent question at issue," he wrote, and had thus lost the trust of the voter, who sensed that there was no real meaning to the movement.<sup>87</sup>

Actually, the defeat was not a loss for the farmers' movement, but a defeat for the Iowa Democrats. This flirtation with the farmers' movement shows the inherent weakness of the party under the domination of a Bourbon element which refused to recognize the economic realities of the region. The state had a number of strong Democratic editors, but nowhere in their publications is found an awareness of the problems facing the farmer in an age when industry — "monopoly" to the farmer — made the profits and the agriculturist received only the crumbs from the table. Furthermore, Iowa Democracy had no strong leader who could rally the voters. Their candidates were often unknowns, and their campaigns were weak and poorly organized. Irish, probably the best known Democrat in the state, had no real platform on which to stand. In 1873 he had hurried to put himself at the head of a movement that grew out of the farmers' economic problems, and then did his best to turn that movement from the path it had chosen. He and others like him succeeded only in destroying the movement, temporarily. Horace Merrill, in a recent study, assessed Iowa Democracy as "spiritless" and without leaders "whose profession was regional politics,"<sup>88</sup> a thesis confirmed by the 1873-1874 history of the Iowa Democrats.

<sup>87</sup> Letter of Porte Welch to Sam Evans, Oct. 20, 1874, in *Ottumwa Democrat*, Oct. 22, 1874.

<sup>88</sup> Merrill, *Bourbon Democracy of the Middle West*, 97.

The story of the Anti-Monopoly party in Iowa thus comes to be the story of the Democratic party, rather than an account of a phase of the agrarian revolt. Greenbackism, already stirring, was more fortunate in finding a leader — this time from the ranks of the Republican party. James B. Weaver, a life-long Republican, quarreled with his party over the currency issue and left it to join and to lead the Greenbackers.<sup>89</sup>

The traditional view of the Republican party is that it is the party of "big business." But in Iowa the party was from time to time willing to ignore the demands of business interests, if by so doing it they could win elections. The Republican leaders in the state were undoubtedly favorable to monopoly and opposed to greenbackism, as were the Bourbon Democrats, but they managed to hide their feelings better. Clarkson of the *Register*, the strongest editorial voice in the party, embraced railroad regulation with enthusiasm; four years later, and with certainly more enthusiasm, he supported the repeal of that legislation, once the political winds had shifted in that direction. He even preached a mild greenbackism for a time, when that was becoming popular. Realizing that economic prosperity and political success often go hand in hand, the Republicans wisely followed the needs of their region, and thus succeeded in remaining in power. This may not be high principle, but it was successful politics. In addition, the Republicans had a goodly number of well-known and popular candidates to offer the voters. And, probably most important, they conducted organized and carefully planned campaigns. Republican politicians worked hard at their jobs and were rewarded with almost uninterrupted control of the state from the Civil War until the political revolution of 1932, with the exception of a four-year interim under a Democratic governor, Horace Boies. Boies's victory in 1889 can be attributed on one hand to the fact that the Democrats in that year adopted and strongly supported a current popular issue — the repeal of the state's prohibitory law — and on the other hand, to the fact that the Republicans made a bad choice for their gubernatorial candidate in picking a man unacceptable to the Farmers' Alliance, which was then the voice of agrarian protest.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>89</sup> For biography of Weaver, see Fred Emory Haynes, *James Baird Weaver* (Iowa City, 1919).

<sup>90</sup> Jean B. Kern, "The Political Career of Horace Boies," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 47:220-21 (July, 1949). For Clarkson on greenbackism, see Fred E. Haynes, *Third Party Movements Since the Civil War . . .* (Iowa City, 1916), 175ff.

Even as the Democrats of Iowa ran cheering back to their old party standard in 1874, the farmers were toying with a new idea to solve their continuing economic troubles. Inflation in the form of more greenbacks now won their allegiance. But the Democrats were not to be taken in again by the farmers: their biggest fight in the convention which met in June of 1875 was over nothing more than a name for their party. Evans wanted the time-honored name of "Democratic," while Irish, still trying to be all things to all men, wanted something more all-inclusive. Irish won, and the party's platform began with the sonorous words: "The Democrats, Liberal Republicans, and Anti-Monopolists of the State of Iowa, in delegate convention assembled. . . ." Although the Democratic party of Iowa in 1875 is sometimes considered a continuation of the Anti-Monopoly party, actually it was wholly Democratic with not even a bow to antimonopolism.

The defeat of 1875 was even worse than that of 1874, and Evans concluded that in the future Democratic platforms did not need to contain "a single utterance outside of the usual resolutions adopted by Democratic conventions." Since the platform had been just about that — except for the ponderous name adopted but not used — it is hard to see what Evans complained about. However, he wanted no more "new departures," just the old principles, the "traditional doctrines of the Democratic party." Even Irish now agreed with him.<sup>91</sup>

Thus ended the Democratic experiment with reform. They had succeeded in destroying the Anti-Monopoly party, but the farmers were already turning to the greenback issue as the new panacea. The Democrats had accepted antimonopolism as a vehicle for political victory, and they had failed. They would not go so far as "soft money," even to win an election.

<sup>91</sup> Ottumwa Democrat, July 1, Oct. 28, Nov. 4, 1875.



## PIONEER EXPERIENCES IN KEOKUK COUNTY, 1858-1874

By *Edith H. Hurlbutt\**

"On the N.Y. Central R. R. going along at a great rate, reached Cleveland, Ohio about sundown but still kept a-travelling." Thus wrote Hanno Newton in his diary in 1858 when he, with his parents, were enroute from Connecticut to Iowa to establish a home in the section of Keokuk County then known as Dutch Creek and now the site of the town of Keota. Hanno had started to keep a diary two years before, and he continued this day-by-day account of events until his death at the age of ninety. Having consulted the diary many times for information for articles published in his paper, the *Keota Eagle*, Mr. W. C. Richardson regards this diary as "a veritable mine of information."<sup>1</sup>

Hosea N. Newton and Mary Anne Bolles Fiske, natives of Cheshire County, New Hampshire, were married in Hinsdale, where their son Hanno was born in 1838. Hosea, who was engaged in the business of making oyster kegs in Hinsdale, moved his family to Fair Haven, Connecticut, in 1840, where he continued to engage in his business as cooper and where he taught his son the trade.

The pioneer spirit which had brought Richard Newton to Massachusetts from England in 1638 imbued his descendant, Hosea. After hearing reports from friends about the opportunities in Iowa, he made an exploratory trip in 1856 and bought 160 acres of prairie land at \$1.25 per acre. Two years later he moved his family to Iowa.

Even though the family did not travel by covered wagon, as so many of the immigrants of that time did, the account of their trip makes interesting reading. From Fair Haven they took a stagecoach called the "King's Omnibus" to the dock at New Haven, where they boarded a steamboat at ten

\*Mrs. Hurlbutt, who is secretary to Dean Merrill E. Jarchow, Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., wishes to thank Dean Jarchow for reading the manuscript and making suggestions, and also C. N. Newton of Keota, Iowa, for allowing her to use the diary of Hanno P. Newton which is in his possession.

<sup>1</sup> *Newton Diary*, April 7, 1858; W. C. Richardson to author, Oct. 12, 1951.



o'clock at night; nine hours later they arrived at New York, "two hours behind time on account of the heavy fog on the sound." They took a hack to the Gerard House, where they remained until six o'clock at night when they took "the cars" for Albany, New York, arriving there about midnight. At two o'clock in the afternoon of April 8, three days after they had left their home at Fair Haven, the Newtons arrived at Chicago. After visiting a few days in and around Chicago, they boarded "the cars" at Aurora at ten o'clock in the morning and that night at 6:30 they were met by friends at Davenport. Finally, on April 16 they arrived at Columbus City in Louisa County, the end of the railroad. They hired a man with team to take them to Washington that afternoon, and the next morning hired the same man to take them on to Lafayette Township in Keokuk County, about twenty-two miles. They lost their way and did not reach their destination until five o'clock in the evening. They "stoped [*sic*] at Hinman's (a hard place). Evening called upon a Mr. Farrand."<sup>2</sup>

The Newtons had come to what must have seemed the end of the world. They had a farm, but there were no buildings on it, not even a tree or a stick of wood, as they were to discover when they started to mark out the places where the buildings were to be placed. They had left the civilized and populated East, had brought all their personal belongings and perhaps some furniture with them, but they had no place to live and no place to bring their "goods," making it necessary to leave them at Columbus City.

After looking the situation over on Sunday, the day after their arrival, they decided that the Farrand's looked like a good place for them to stay, so early on Monday morning, "before breakfast," Hanno wrote, "Father went over to Mr. Farrand's and arranged boarding for us." It was here that they stayed for three months, and it would appear that Mr. Farrand was very cooperative and helpful in getting the new family adjusted and started on their new venture. He is mentioned in many subsequent entries as accompanying them on trips for supplies and as working with them on various farm operations.<sup>3</sup>

Their next step was to buy a team of horses for \$250 and a cow for \$20. They then borrowed a wagon and went to a sawmill, nine miles south on Skunk River, for lumber, getting their loads stuck in the mud twice on their way back to Mr. Farrand's. The day after this strenuous trip they built

<sup>2</sup> *Diary*, April 6, 17, 1858.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, April 19, 1858.

a stable for the horses and cow. None of their land being broken that first year, they rented a small piece of plowed ground for corn, but it was a very wet season and they did not get their corn planted until June 10.

Supplies were difficult to obtain because of the long distances which they had to be hauled. About two weeks after their arrival, Hanno, in company with Mr. Farrand and Mr. J. D. Batterson, went to Iowa City, about forty miles away, to buy some necessary equipment. Leading Hanno's team and driving Mr. Farrand's, they made the trip to Iowa City in eleven hours. On the return trip the roads were muddy and their loads were heavy. They spent the better part of two days driving home. Getting through mudholes really took patience. For example, one line in the diary states quite simply what must have spelled patience as well as brute strength: "got stuck in a mud hole so that I did not get out for over 2 hours."<sup>4</sup>

Once home, however, Hanno and Hosea lost no time in getting started on their building program. The next morning they "took the loads down to our place unloaded them. afterward commenced digging the cellar."<sup>5</sup>

While the Newtons had arrived on their farm on April 17, it was not until June 21 that they went to Columbus City for the rest of the "goods." Since their barn was not ready for "living in" for another month, we can only conjecture as to what they did with their "goods" during that time. The trip to Columbus City and back is an interesting little story in itself. Mr. Hinman and Mr. Miller went along, driving their own teams, making three wagon loads that they hauled the thirty-five miles. They made the trip to Columbus City in one day, then were delayed in getting started back the next day because, in the words of the diary, "The Freight Agent being away . . . could not get our goods untill [sic] about 11 o'clock." Once the goods were loaded on the wagons and the return trip started, troubles multiplied. First, the roads were very bad, and their loads were heavy, Hanno's being 1,800 pounds; then Hanno lost his "pail and halters"; the next day "Mr. Hinman broke a whiffle tree"; and finally, on their second day out from Columbus City, darkness overtook them when they were only five miles from home. The "roads being so bad we concluded not to go any farther tonight. borrowed a sythe [sic] and cut some grass for the horses. then went into an empty house and camped on the floor." Alto-

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, July 2, 1858.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, July 3, 1858.

gether, it took them three and a half days to make the round trip of seventy miles.<sup>6</sup>

Many loads of lumber from the sawmill were needed before they had enough to complete the farm buildings. Finishing lumber and other supplies had to be hauled from Iowa City, each trip usually consuming two or three days. But at last, three months from the date of their arrival, the barn was finished, and, in the words of the diary: "We quit boarding out . . . moved into our barn. it is quite comfortable."<sup>7</sup>

For four months, then, the barn was their home. On September 21 they "got ready to raise our house," and on October 9, "moved into the chambers of our new house. seems some better." The finishing work on the house continued until November 24, Thanksgiving Day, when the diary reads: "Run off lime for plastering. Never worked before [on] Thanksgiving day." They were working against time now, for the winter was soon to set in. On November 29 they "laid chimney," and on December 2 they plastered the lower part of the house. Snow began to fall about four o'clock that afternoon, and they did not get the plastering finished until eight o'clock. They then brought the stove down from upstairs, and by eleven o'clock had it set up and "a fire going hot."<sup>8</sup>

The fact that the Newtons first built their barn — a barn substantial enough for them to live in for several months — and then erected a plastered house indicates that they differed from the typical pioneer of the fifties. Most of the early settlers first built a rude cabin, heated by a fireplace, for their family shelter; later, they might build a rough lean-to shed to house their animals. That the Newtons were building on such a grand scale must have been a cause of wonder and envy to their neighbors.

Hosea turned his skill as cooper to that of carpenter and thence to cabinet maker. He became known, ultimately, as an excellent cabinet maker, and we know that he had plenty of practice in the trade. He made their own furniture, such as bedsteads, bureaus, washtubs, and a bookcase with pigeonholes; he also made machinery such as wagons, sleds, a seeder and wheelbarrow, and plows. Not only did he use his skill at carpentry for his own work, but he was called upon to do a good bit of that kind of work in the neighborhood. When the Newtons became firmly established, there

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, June 21, 22, 23, 1858.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, July 19, 1858.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 21, Oct. 9, Nov. 24, 29, Dec. 2, 1858.



were many entries in the diary, such as the following: "Father went to work for Mr. Jones — frameing [sic] his house." Even during that first summer, when they were so busy with their own house, they were called upon to help their neighbors with building projects, one such call being to help "raise" a neighbor's house. But there was fun as well as hard work at those house-raising. After the Newtons had raised their own house, Hanno wrote in his diary: "haveing [sic] plenty of watermelons when we got through we eat some."<sup>9</sup>

From time to time other buildings were added to the Newton farm homestead: on August 11, 1869, they "raised the Granary," and a month later they finished a cowshed. By 1867 the family had outgrown the original house, and an addition was built.<sup>10</sup>

The growing family is accounted for by the fact that in 1862 Hanno married Maria DeBerard, who, with her parents, had moved onto a corner of the section opposite the Newtons some two years before. By 1867 three children had been born to the couple, all girls. Since they needed more male help on the farm, they took a boy, Charlie Ames, "to raise." Add to this the fact that there were many guests coming to the Newton home from time to time, often staying over night — one wonders where they all slept. The original house had a living room, bedroom, kitchen, and pantry downstairs and four bedrooms upstairs. In 1867 a large room was added to the back of the house and used as kitchen and dining room.

Crowded conditions again existed in 1871. That was the year that a branch of the Rock Island Railroad was extended from Washington through Sigourney. It cut through the Newton farm, and the Newtons took some of the laborers to board, which in those days meant rooms as well. There were by this time five children, making eleven people altogether in the family — add to this the railroad men — where would guests be put? But guests they did have, as indicated by Hanno's entry: "today the first time in two weeks but what there has been someone here besides our own folks."<sup>11</sup>

During the first years in this new land, the Newtons spent much time during the winter months in the woods over near the river, cutting and hauling wood to burn and to make fence posts. At times they camped over night, bringing home two loads instead of the usual one. It is doubtful if

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1, 1864; Sept. 21, 1858.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 11, 1869.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1863.



this kind of camping was enjoyable; to take the sting out of their problem, the Newtons, with neighbors J. Sherman and Doty, built a "cabin to camp in" in the winter of 1862-1863. Even at that, one can be reasonably certain that the cabin was merely a protection from the wintry blasts.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to carpentering and wood cutting, there was farm work to do, even that first year, and while they probably did not do very much on their own farm that first summer, they did do some farm work for their neighbors. On June 16, "Helped Father finish planting corn over to Mr. Case's today," which, by the way, was quite a late date to plant corn. However, it made good corn, as Hanno testified in an article in the *Keota Eagle* in May, 1877.<sup>13</sup>

Other farming operations mentioned that first summer were mowing and putting up hay, mowing buckwheat, and husking corn. It would appear that these operations were all performed by hand, since it took two men all day to mow an acre and a half of hay. The next year special mention is made that they cut hay with a machine. Corn, of course, was all husked by hand. Since there were no fences, they had some difficulty in keeping the cattle out of the corn; in July of that first summer there are several entries in the diary indicating that someone usually stayed at home to herd the cattle.

The pattern of the rapid development of farm machinery from hand operated to horse operated is clearly shown in the diary. Hay was cut by machine as early as 1859 and 1860, while corn was still being planted by hand after the field had been "marked" out, but in 1864 some corn was planted with a two-horse planter. In 1859 the plowing was done with a homemade shovel plow, but in 1863 and 1864 the Newtons made a sulky plow. They took the "hind wheels of H. Case's wagon set the tin, and fited [sic] them onto the plow." Sowing wheat was done with shovel plows in 1861, but in 1863 they "bought pattern right of a seed sower," and set out to make one. The pattern was evidently a good one, since the entry on March 30 stated that the "machine worked very well."<sup>14</sup>

Threshing in 1864 was accomplished by the cradling method, but was soon changed to the reaper except, as in 1869, when the ground was so wet that they had to revert to cradling. Until 1871 corn was hoed by hand, all

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 7, 1863.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, June 16, 1858; H. P. Newton, "Notes from a Farmer's Diary," *Keota Eagle*, May, 1877.

<sup>14</sup> *Diary*, April 22, 1864; Jan. 28, March 30, 1863.

hands helping, even the womenfolk, but that year they bought a corn cultivator which must have revolutionized the operation.

The crops raised by the Newtons included corn, wheat, oats, buckwheat, rye, and sorghum. No mention is made of the varieties they grew except in the case of wheat, when Fife, Tea, and Club were cleaned with a fanning mill in 1863.<sup>15</sup>

Since there were no native trees on the Newton land, they planted trees from time to time. By 1863 they had a hedgerow "between Smock and us," and that year they set out some willows. The next year they bought more "willow cuttings at \$2.00 per thousand," and also set out cottonwood sprouts. In 1867 they started a seedling bed of maples, using seeds which they had had sent from the East; in 1871 they set out the maple seedlings.<sup>16</sup>

Fences very soon became a necessity, and the work of building them was commenced in 1859. Rail fencing was the cheapest kind to build, but it was a time-consuming job. There were countless entries made in the diary of which the following is typical: "Father & I went to timber and split rails." Merrill E. Jarchow cites an example of the time which it took to make a rail fence: "it required 6,720 rails, fourteen to the rod, to fence eighty acres, while the job of splitting the rails took one man about sixty-seven days. Further, it required 1,920 stakes and 960 blocks for the support of such a fence."<sup>17</sup> When we read about the times that the sheep strayed, and how they sometimes had to hunt for several days before they found their cows, we can appreciate the fact that they must have been very eager, indeed, to get fences built as soon as they could. It is not clear from the diary whether they fenced their fields or their stock in first.<sup>18</sup>

What they did for water the first year is a mystery, but in August, 1859, they went on a hunt for stone to "wall a well," which they were digging and in which they installed a chain pump.<sup>19</sup>

Doing a little conjecturing from the fact that willows seemed to be a good kind of tree for them to plant, and the fact that in 1860 they hired a Mr. Gordon with a ditcher to make "113 rods of ditch," we can conclude that part of the farm, at least, was quite wet. Another pretty good proof

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1863.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, April 27, 1863; April 26, 1864.

<sup>17</sup> Merrill E. Jarchow, *The Earth Brought Forth* (St. Paul, Minn., 1949), 7.

<sup>18</sup> *Diary*, March 7, 1863.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1859.

that they had some low, wet land, as well as that there was a bit of humor in Hanno's makeup, is an entry in the diary on March 1, 1861: "At noon heard Frogs sharpening their teeth for the first time this year." At the present time there is a so-called "slough" which cuts through the farm and across which, at one place, is a bridge. Probably this is where the ditching was done. Aside from this slough, the entire farm is tillable, and probably the slough was a very valuable factor in the worth of the farm, since it provided water for the stock during the summer.<sup>20</sup>

As was the case with most of the farmers in southern Iowa, the corn-hog program proved to be the most profitable for the Newtons, since that is the most consistently reported on. Early in their farming, they sold much of their livestock already butchered, their chief market being Washington. One day in January of 1862 they butchered twelve hogs, the next day they "killed 2 cows," and two days later "killed 8 turkeys." They established connections in the East where they could sell turkeys, chickens, and geese: dressing as high as sixty turkeys or "51 turkeys and 28 geese" in one day. This was not easy work, and the remuneration was very little as evidenced by one entry in 1869, after they had dressed thirty-five geese. Hanno wrote: "Tough work. Took geese to Washington and got 50 cents a piece for them." While frequent reference is made concerning the dressing, packing, and shipping of fowl, no mention is made of the price received from the East. The only mention made of the price of dressed turkey was that which was sold in Washington in 1872 when they received eight and a half cents per pound.<sup>21</sup>

On a farm there are many projects which one may follow to turn one's time and resources into cash. The Newtons tried various ones, such as the dressing of fowl and the butchering of hogs and beef. At one time Hanno tried raising bees, but that did not turn out as well as some other projects, for he wrote: "went to work to take care of bees got stung so bad had to have the doctor." Only once during this period is any mention made of the sale of eggs when, in 1860, they received seven cents per dozen. They may have sold butter occasionally, but only once was any mention made of it, when they "sent 100 lb. . . . to Washington." One project which was successful year after year was that of making sorghum molasses; in 1861 they made 900 gallons, which they sold at twenty cents a gallon. There

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, April 27, 1860; March 1, 1861.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 18, 20, 1862; Nov. 23, 1870; Dec. 20, 1869.



was much work to it: cutting wood from the timber, hauling it home, piling it in readiness for the fire which would be kept burning continually for days; in addition, they had to strip the cane and then boil and watch the molasses.<sup>22</sup>

The food which the pioneers had to eat, although of interest to us today, apparently did not seem important enough to Hanno to write about, except in the case of the special treats like oysters which were shipped them from the East. One entry is typical: "rec'd a 2 gall. keg Oysters from H. C." When such a shipment would arrive the Newtons would give a series of oyster suppers, one time inviting the older folk of the neighborhood, and a few days later the younger set. To these people who had been brought up on seafoods such as oysters, lobsters, and codfish, a shipment of such delicacies must have been deeply appreciated. May Ramsey, Hanno's daughter, in a letter dated October 24, 1952, reported that her father, when he was five years old, "would steal his mother's scheres [sic] and go down to the shore and open them [oysters] and eat them right there."<sup>23</sup>

One of their favorite foods was hominy or hulled corn which they served with milk and sugar. The following description of how the hominy was made is May Ramsey's: "They had a hopper made out of wood up on a stand where they put the wood ashes & made lye. Grandmother would take corn & boil it in lye water untill [sic] the shell would come off. (That was in a big kettle out doors). Then take the corn to the well and wash it until she had all the lye off. I remember how I watched her & wondered about it. It sure made good hominy when it was washed enough."<sup>24</sup>

Another favorite food was cheese, which they also made themselves. Hosea made a cheese press with a round box for the cheese, and Maria made the cheese. To quote May Ramsey again: "We little ones watched close when they took the chees [sic] out of the press and trimed [sic] the edges. We got it to eat. My! It was good."<sup>25</sup>

Having been easterners, they, of course, had their Boston baked beans and brown bread. As was the custom in those days, they also took wheat and corn to the gristmill and had their own flour and corn meal made. In

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1864; Jan. 27, 1871; Nov. 2, 1861.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 4, 1860; May Ramsey to author, Oct. 28, 1952.

<sup>24</sup> May Ramsey to author, Dec. 13, 1951.

<sup>25</sup> *Idem.*



their garden they raised their own potatoes, carrots, turnips (in 1864 they "pulled" 17 bushels), pumpkins, and dry beans.<sup>26</sup>

While there are not many accounts of trapping, hunting, or fishing, these undoubtedly were favorite sports which often proved profitable. Traps were set for prairie chickens, mink, and muskrat, and occasionally Hosea and Hanno attended wolf hunts. On one such occasion, Hanno reported they "got badly fooled . . . nary Wolfe was seen." Fishing in the Skunk River was good, and "lots of fish" were caught, but the kinds were not mentioned.<sup>27</sup>

Neighborliness was one of the greatest assets which pioneers had. Although their houses were not close together, the occupants lived in close association with each other, being dependent upon one another for their social life, for help in getting various farm and household jobs done, and for assistance in times of need.

Entertainment in those early days was pretty much of the homemade variety, and much of it was educational in character. The singing school was probably the most popular and the longest lived. There were also geography schools, arithmetic schools, the spelling bees, and the literary societies, each of which seemed to survive for only a year at a time. There were other entertainments, such as dancing, school "exhibitions," and "donations." Hanno tells of one such donation party which was held in January of 1859: "Afternoon Father, Mother, Clara went to Mr. Hill's to a donation. Hobart & Howard Case, Ben Vastine and I rigged up a 4 horse team and got a load of young folks and attended the donation in the eve. a very cold time . . . not very good sleding [sic] Jan. 7. I got home this morning about 5 o'clock, but they did not get around with the sled till about 8. they had broke the tongue and wore off some 5 inches of the hind of the runner. Ther. 8° below zero."<sup>28</sup>

Fairs and circuses and neighborhood parties came in for their share of participation, but the diary does not go into detail concerning them, only an occasional remark such as "had a tip top time" or "had a first rate time," indicating that the event had been pleasant.<sup>29</sup>

There were two holidays which usually called for a special celebration:

<sup>26</sup> *Diary*, Nov. 2, 1864.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1, 1865; July 25, 1863.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 6, 1859.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, March 13, 15, 1861.

the Fourth of July and Christmas. Thanksgiving was mentioned occasionally as being a day when they went to a neighbor's for dinner, or they had neighbors to their place. The first account of a Fourth of July event was in 1859, when Hanno wrote: "Afternoon 10 couple of us took a ride rode until 5 P. M. stoped at the school house about 3 hours. then came here and took supper afterwards drove up to Scotland." And the next day the diary continues: "Got home about 4 o'clock this morning . . . had a house full of company to supper. *Old folks.*"<sup>30</sup>

Each year, it seems, they attended the Fourth of July celebration at a different place: Washington, Cramer's grove, Cochran's grove, Talleyrand, Keota. One year they had the celebration in the Newton grove. May Ramsey in telling about it said: "They were supposed to be in the Maple grove N. of the house, but They were all over the place. Grandfather said never again would he have public celebrate there . . . but I had a big time." There were usually about 1,500 people at these celebrations, so it is no wonder that one year was enough for the Newtons.<sup>31</sup>

During the first years in Iowa, Christmas seems to have been just another day; sometimes there would be a school meeting in the afternoon, sometimes the family went right on with their farm work, one time gathering corn, another time going to the river for wood, and one year they "ground out 40 gall. sorghum juice for Vinegar." But from 1870 on there were more festivities arranged for each year. One time unexpected company arrived; Hanno had gone to Talleyrand, and when he returned found "Mrs. Fobes, Jay F. and G. W. Brockway here. Had chicken pie & oysters for dinner." The year 1873 was the first time that a church program was attended by the Newton family, but from then on they took a very active part in the planning and the work of carrying out the Christmas "Festival."<sup>32</sup>

One major contribution which the Newton family made to these festivals was a ship which had been constructed by John Lynch, one of the railroad men who had come to the Newton farm when the railroad was built. He had been a shipbuilder and a sailor. After the railroad was completed he stayed on at the farm with the Newtons. He had built a model ship which could be taken apart and stored from year to year. Each year as long as

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, July 5, 1859.

<sup>31</sup> May Ramsey to author, Feb. 13, 1952.

<sup>32</sup> *Diary*, Dec. 25, 1862; Dec. 25, 1872; Dec. 25, 1874.

John was there he assembled the ship; after he left Hosea or Hanno did the assembling. For many years they used the ship instead of the traditional Christmas tree. In 1950 May Ramsey wrote about the ship: "It was pretty and the first time it was used, I received a big wax doll on it. Everyone took their gifts and put them on for the family. My! But I was happy."<sup>33</sup>

Hosea and Hanno were lodgemen, both belonging to the Masonic and Odd Fellow lodges for many years. In 1928 Hanno laid claim to being the oldest Mason in length of membership in southeastern Iowa. At the time of his death in 1929 he had been a Mason for 65 years and an Odd Fellow for 71. Although Hanno had been a Mason since 1864, he did not take the "chapter" degrees in Keota until about 1921. Mr. W. C. Richardson tells about their taking the degrees together: "I was perhaps 25 and I recall being present when his petition was read after I had part of my work. The secretary read it as 'age 28. His petition says 82 but it is evidently a transposition.' I rose up and told them Mr. Newton was really 82 and quite enthused about taking the degrees."<sup>34</sup>

More important to the life of the community than the social events, however, was the cooperation among the members of the neighborhood. The men folk pooled their manpower when certain farm jobs, such as haying, threshing, and even plowing and planting, were to be done. Persons with special skills were called upon to perform their jobs for all the neighbors. At first Mr. Doty made their boots; they would go to him and be measured, and about a month later they would return to get their finished boots. Later, when the DeBerards moved into the community, Mr. DeBerard did shoe repair work. As was mentioned above, Hosea was called upon for carpentering and cabinet work. Hanno, who possibly had a little more education than his neighbors, contributed to the life of the neighborhood in the drawing up of papers such as the "draft of LaFayette Township." He also acted as clerk at public auctions.<sup>35</sup>

Very often, when there was illness in a family, Mary Anne was called upon to "tend the sick." And if the ailing persons did not respond to treatment, and death would claim another victim, Mary Anne was usually on hand to help "lay out" the dead. Once when a mother did not recover from an illness, the father sent for Mary Anne to come over and get their

<sup>33</sup> May Ramsey to author, Jan. 16, 1952.

<sup>34</sup> W. C. Richardson to author, Oct. 12, 1951.

<sup>35</sup> *Diary*, May 21, 1861.



child who was sick also. Although a blizzard was raging in its second day, they went after the child, arriving home before the storm became so bad that traveling was impossible.

The weather, of course, played a very important part in the life of the pioneer farmers, and Hanno faithfully recorded each day's weather conditions. For the most part these notations are short and of little interest, except in the case of unusual storms such as the one recorded on May 22, 1873:

About 2 P. M. there came up a very heavy rain with a good deal of large hail and a tornado started near Lancaster tore a number of houses to pieces there and came on towards Keota destroyed a number of buildings came on to the east side of Clear Creek. Destroyed Nick Engladniger's house and killed his wife and child. Destroyed Mr. Carter's house and Barn destroyed about 50 head hogs 20 head horses 1 bull 1 cow etc. making his loss some 3 or \$4000. it traveled on destroying fences etc. Destroyed F. Campbell's house & hurt Mr. C. his wife and 2 children & his barn it then raised passed over Keota and traveled on about 10 mi. east here where it struck the ground again and the destruction was terrible killing some 10 persons injuring a great number. the loss cannot be estimated.<sup>36</sup>

The Newtons, having a well developed community spirit, took an active interest in schools, mail services, civic affairs, and farmers' clubs. Soon after their arrival in the west, Hosea was elected sub-director of the school board, and in May, 1859, Hosea and Hanno helped to build a schoolhouse on the Newton land.

Church played an important part in the life of the family. While at Fair Haven in 1848 they had all been baptized in the Episcopal church, and Sundays were spent at church — "all day and evening." During their first years in the west there were no churches, but Sunday School was held in the schoolhouse as early as July, 1859, and soon after this they arranged to have itinerant preachers conduct church in the schoolhouse. The year after the railroad was built and the new station at Keota established, interested folk got together, chose two lots for a Methodist church, formed a board of trustees, and on May 12, 1872, "Mr. Smock preached the first sermon in Keota," and the Newtons were present in full force to hear him. While there seems to have been some interest in spiritualism about 1860 in

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, May 22, 1873.



the neighborhood, only one mention was made in Hanno's diary of their attending a meeting.<sup>37</sup>

For years Talleyrand was their mail center. About once a week someone would go after the mail for the neighborhood, that task usually being assumed by Hanno. Later on they had post office meetings, some at the Newton home, but wherever they were held, the Newtons always attended. However, up to 1874 no change had been made in their mail arrangements.

In civic and political matters, the Newtons always showed keen interest. In 1862 Hosea was justice of the peace, using the authority of his office to perform marriage ceremonies and to make out deeds. In 1862 Hanno was constable, and in 1872 he was elected town clerk. Politically, they were Republicans. Once, however, Hosea strayed from the fold and joined a new party known as the Anti-Monopolists. He threw his hat in the ring and was elected state senator, serving in the 1874 and 1876 sessions of the General Assembly at Des Moines. Hanno's sketchy description of the election follows:

Oct. 14, 1873. Election Day. the election was held at Keota for this Twp. Everything passed off very well. 190 votes cast. A pleasant and nice day. Oct. 15th. got through counting out last night about 3 P. M. I took the train at noon for Sigourney to take the returns up. Anti-Monopolists quite jubilant over their success. Father's majority for senator, 415.

Further mention is made in the diary of the times that Hosea went to Des Moines during the 1874 and 1876 sessions, but nothing is recorded of what part he took in the proceedings. The *Senate Journal* indicates that his defection from the Republican party lasted only one term, that of 1874; in the 1876 *Journal*, Hosea voted with the Republicans. He was one of the few Republicans who had defected to the Anti-Monopolists; when it seemed that the Democrats were taking over this third party movement, most of the Republicans returned to their former allegiance.

Hanno's experiences during the Civil War had probably strengthened his Republicanism. He had joined the Iowa State Militia when the war broke out, but the only bit of excitement he recorded was during the first few days of August, 1863, when he played a minor role in the short-lived uprising at South English which came to be known in Iowa history as the "Tally War." The Rev. Cyphert Tally of Keokuk County, a Baptist minis-

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, May 12, 1872.

ter with a southern background, led a group of Democrats — “Copperheads” in the minds of all Republicans — into South English during a Republican rally there. Tally was shot down and died shortly thereafter.<sup>38</sup> Hanno recounts his part in the ensuing hysteria:

Aug. 1, 1863. 7 P. M. started for Scotland. . . . heard the report that there had been a fight at South English one man killed. Came on home mustered a crowd and I went up there with them.

Aug. 2. arrived at S. E. at daylight. a good deal of excitement. sent a comm. to confer with the Copperheads.

Aug. 3. I stood on guard last night. great excitement on account of the committee not returning sent out spies recruits coming [sic] in from all quarters.

Aug. 4. Stood on guard last night. Col. Chipman of Washington took command today. P. M. built barricades and rifle pits at all of principle entrances. About sun down the Home Guards of Washington came with 40 extra stand of Arms.

Wed. Aug. 5. Had a very heavy rain last night. The Sheriff arrested 10 men today and started for Iowa City with them. About 100 men staid the bal. went home. I came home in the afternoon. The Governor [Samuel J. Kirkwood] went through Talleyrand and on to Sigourney. 4 companies of Militia at Sigourney.

Thus ended the Tally War and Hanno's military service.

Life on the prairie was, at times, pretty drab, uninteresting, and discouraging. Having lived in the mountains of New Hampshire, the Newtons would get homesick for their friendly grandeur. May Ramsey wrote that she could remember how her grandmother, who was small, “would curl up in her rocking chair and cry.” In 1866 they decided to rent the farm. Hanno went into the mercantile business in Talleyrand, while Hosea and Mary Anne went back East for a six-months visit. However, the mercantile business did not prove to be satisfactory for Hanno, so after ten months they bought the renter off their place and all moved back to the farm.<sup>39</sup>

World events affected the lives of the Newtons in only a remote way, and were reported merely as items of interest. A few such items mentioned were: a total eclipse of the sun at 5 P. M. on July 7, 1869; the celebration of the

<sup>38</sup> Robert Rutland, “Copperheads in Iowa,” *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 52:17 (January, 1954).

<sup>39</sup> May Ramsey to author, Oct. 13, 1953.

transmission of Queen Victoria's message over the Atlantic telegraph (about which they first heard in a letter from a friend in the East); and the Chicago fire, which news was also received by letter. The question of equal rights for women was debated at their Lyceum as early as December 21, 1858.<sup>40</sup>

The progressive building up of the territory can easily be traced by the changing of trading centers. When the Newtons first started their building program in 1858, finishing lumber and other materials were hauled from Iowa City, forty miles away; by 1867, when the addition was built, Hanno "went to Washington for lumber," twenty-two miles away; and in 1872, "Father went over to Keota and bought a load of lumber," one mile away, and he "got home at 9 A. M." — a far cry from the three-day trips they had made fourteen years before.<sup>41</sup>

Pioneers are distinguished by one thing in particular — they can lay claim to many firsts. Hanno recorded some of them: they bought their first sewing machine from Chicago in 1871; their first coal stove for the "front" room in 1863; on January 7, 1864, Hanno went to the "coal bank" for their first load of coal; Hosea Newton and J. Sherman laid the first rail for the railroad in Keokuk County; Hanno rode to Keota on the first train that went across Clear Creek on February 26, 1872; the first lumber which was brought into Keota by train was on March 1, 1872; and the whole Newton family heard the first sermon preached in Keota on May 12, 1872.

The Iowa farm home which the Newton family built provided a way of life such as Hugh Orchard experienced on Old Orchard Farm, so that the Newtons might have said as he did: "That was the luckiest turn anybody ever saw. It led right into peace and plenty, and the chance of a lifetime to build, and set out, and trim, and cultivate, and generally develop a home-stead that not only fed us and clothed us and kept us out of mischief, but somehow formed a kind of reservoir of good will and affection inside us that refuses to fade out."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Diary*, July 7, 1869; Aug. 27, 1858; Oct. 10, 1871.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 1, 1867; March 2, 1872.

<sup>42</sup> Hugh Orchard, *Old Orchard Farm* (Ames, Iowa, 1952), 2.



## SOURCE MATERIAL OF IOWA HISTORY

[When the government opened the first land office in Iowa at Burlington in 1838, President Van Buren appointed Augustus Caesar Dodge, the son of Henry Dodge of Wisconsin, as Register, and a former West Pointer with the resounding name of Ver Planck Van Antwerp as Receiver. Van Antwerp, who had visited Iowa Territory the year before, returned to the state and there made his home until the outbreak of the Civil War when, on the basis of his West Point training, he was given a commission in the regular army. After the war, his army duties carried him to Texas, but he always considered Iowa his home. In 1874, when John R. Shaffer, the secretary of the executive committee for the State Fair, was planning his program, he wrote to Van Antwerp, then in retirement in Maryland, and asked him to attend. Van Antwerp wrote a long and reminiscent letter in reply, declining the invitation with regret, but recounting some of his early experiences in Iowa. The letter was published in the *Keokuk Gate City* of October 7 and 14, 1874, and is here reproduced in part — EDITOR.]

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### REMINISCENCES OF EARLY IOWA

. . . I fully appreciate the honor conveyed by this "Complimentary" invitation, and, were it in my power to do so, would with great pleasure avail myself of it. This, I regret to say, is forbidden by the condition of my health. If I had the strength necessary to enable me to make the long journey there and back, few things would gratify me as much as to meet once more, ere life's scenes close in upon me, many old friends in Iowa, some of whom went there about the time that I did — not far from forty years ago now — to become the founders of the future State. A State, however, it did not get to be, till ten years after I had landed upon its soil, at Keokuk. This was in June, 1837, when Iowa was not only not a State, but not in existence even as a Territory; being then still a part of Wisconsin — with its seat of government somewhere up north of the State of Illinois, and east of the Mississippi river. In fact, no Keokuk existed, as a town. There were, as I recollect the place, a few log cabins — a dozen or



more — dotted along the hill side — with “Rat Row,” I think, (since become historic) strung out at the “Foot of the Rapids” — so the little locality was then known — close to the river bank. It was a hard looking place, and as hard in fact as it looked, and such continued to be its character for some years — the unsettled condition to titles to lands in the “Half Breed Tract” inviting there a class of settlers, among whom were some very worthy people, while others of them constituted as “hard” a set as were to be met with anywhere upon the Western borders. The settlement, by judicial action, some years later, of the titles to the land, soon changed all this, and Keokuk became at once as it were, under the influence of the new population that flowed in, as quiet and orderly a place, with an as intelligent and refined a community, as any in the West — to remain so ever since.

My visit from the Wabash — where I then lived — to the Mississippi in 1837 was to proceed up the river to Fort Snelling, six hundred miles above Keokuk, there to hold a treaty with the Chippewa Indians. The late Governor Henry Dodge of Wisconsin had been appointed by the President Commissioner, and I the Secretary, to hold such treaty. Passing up over “The Rapids,” we came first to Fort Madison, and then to Burlington, both small villages, each with but a few hundred inhabitants — the latter boasting, I think, of a single one-story brick house. Muscatine (then called Bloomington) had a few small buildings — “balloon” frames, mostly — hidden among the trees and bushes; and Davenport may have been slightly in advance of her. Dubuque — headquarters of the mining region — was the chief town, above Missouri, on the west side of the Mississippi, with perhaps a thousand inhabitants, mostly miners, and embracing among their number not a few as hard cases and desperate characters — mixed in with a better class — as were found at the “Foot of the Rapids.”

A hundred miles, or thereabouts, above Dubuque, on the east side of the Mississippi, was Prairie-du-Chien, a military post but a few years previously, commanded by Colonel Zachary Taylor, with Jefferson Davis as a Lieutenant under him — the former to become subsequently the virtual conquerer of Mexico, and President of the United States; the latter the leader and master-spirit in the great rebellion against the Union. From Prairie-du-Chien north three hundred miles, to Fort Snelling, no white man lived — except those at that post, and in some way connected with it. The banks of the Mississippi for those three hundred miles — except that there

was a deserted log cabin where the city of La Crosse now stands, and another cabin at the foot of Lake Pepin, on the west side, occupied by a half-breed Indian named Rock — were still as nature made them, beautiful to behold in their solitary grandeur. A trip in a first-class steamboat in those days, through the wild and bold scenery upon the upper Mississippi, was indeed one to be enjoyed. Steamboats went up to Fort Snelling only at long intervals, expressly to carry supplies to that then most remote military out-post.

The treaty held there in 1837 was not with the object specially of procuring more territory to be opened up to white settlement, but rather to obtain possession of the extensive pine region — mostly upon the Chippewa, St. Croix and Black rivers, in the Chippewa country. Prior to the making of the Fort Snelling treaty, there was no pine lumber received at St. Louis and the towns above and below it on the Mississippi, except that brought there on the hurricane decks of steamboats, in the form of flooring from Arkansas, and doors and window sash from Pittsburgh — the latter sent a thousand miles down the Ohio, and two hundred miles up the Mississippi to their place of destination. The effect of the treaty of Fort Snelling was to change all this. Within a year after the treaty was made, great rafts of lumber came floating down the Mississippi from the newly bought pine region to supply abundantly all the towns upon its banks in that article — a process that has been going on steadily ever since.

Such towns consequently have been built up with a rapidity that they otherwise could not have been — thus showing the great importance of the Fort Snelling treaty. It was consummated — not without serious obstacles thrown in the way of it — after three weeks spent in council with the Chippewa chiefs — some forty in number — they ceding, by its terms, all of their claims to a third part, or more, of what constitutes the now State of Wisconsin, and a large slice of Minnesota, above Fort Snelling. The price agreed to be paid, and which subsequently was paid, to the Chippewas for this large cession of their territory was \$800,000, in annual payments running through twenty years.

As Secretary — taken freely into council by the Commissioner — I drew the treaty, which was signed by him, and the forty or more chiefs — Hole-in-the-day, the great chief and warrior of the nation (not his vagabond son of the same name, who figured in Washington long years afterwards, adding no credit to the name); Ma-ge-ga-bo, and others; and witnessed by me as

Secretary, Capt. Martin Scott, the famous "coon-killer," then commanding the U. S. troops at Fort Snelling; the distinguished French *savan*, Monsieur Nicolle, present at the time it was negotiated and concluded; and some half a dozen other persons. Signed at Fort Snelling, on the 29th of July, 1837, it was ratified and confirmed by the Senate, and proclaimed by the President, over his signature, at Washington, June 15, 1838.

Such was the Treaty of Fort Snelling, which, in print, is now before me, as published with the laws of Congress.

There is now, I am told — I have never seen it, nor been on the Mississippi, above Dubuque, since the treaty was made — a beautiful city named St. Paul, built near to Fort Snelling, and the capital of Minnesota. When I drew the treaty — held in a bower, built close under the walls and guns of the fort, to protect us, if need be, against Indian treachery — there was no such place in existence as St. Paul, nor dreamed of. Now, the great States of Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota exist, with I do not know how many territories organized and occupied, away off to the north and west of them. What an illustration of the wonderful growth and prosperity of our glorious country!

When our treaty was consummated, Gov. Dodge and myself, with our little party, had no means of returning down the Mississippi, there being no steamboat, nor any likely to visit Fort Snelling again, for months to come. In such an emergency, Captain Scott had fitted up for us a spacious Mackinaw boat, keel-built, and furnished with a stout sail made of a large tent fly. Thus provided, and with ample stores for the voyage, we disembarked from Fort Snelling and floated down the Mississippi, stopping of nights and tying up at the river bank, when the black cook along prepared supper for us, sumptuously; up again at early dawn for breakfast; then launching out into the broad grand stream, and on our way rejoicing; and sometimes, when the wind favored, hoisting the clean white sail — and this happened to be the case when we were passing through Lake Pepin. The "Lake" is a beautiful sheet of water — a broad expansion of the great river, and two or three miles in length. The sun rose just as we entered it, and a brisk north wind rising at the same time, drove our craft rapidly through the water. How exhilarating, in the midst of the picturesque scenery by which we were surrounded! — the rock of Winona, hallowed by the romantic story that is told of her, with other bold and rugged cliffs, lining the shores of the Lake, adding to the interest of the scene.



I have often made trips up the Hudson, on bright June and October days, on the swift-running and palatial steamboats that formerly navigated it, by day as well as night, and hardly know which afforded the higher enjoyment, the thorough cultivation and refined taste that one sees displayed everywhere along the banks of that noblest of rivers, with its deep waters and bold and constantly changing scenery, or the works of nature upon the Upper Mississippi, just as God made them, changed by no touch of human art, and, though less striking either in boldness or variety than that of the Hudson, still very beautiful to the eye.

Arrived on the third day, I think, after leaving Fort Snelling, at Prairie du Chien. Governor Dodge left us there to go over to his home in Wisconsin, and our spacious and stout mackinaw boat being U. S. government property, had to be left there to be sent up the Wisconsin river where it belonged. I thereupon procured a white birch-bark canoe—long and broad, but so light that four men could carry it—in which the three companions remaining with me, a young cousin and two others and myself, floated on down the river, using our paddles occasionally to help our progress, a hundred miles further, to Dubuque, where we found a steamboat that carried us to St. Louis on our way to our homes.

I had known Governor Dodge well, some half dozen years before the treaty of Fort Snelling, having fallen in with him in the winter of 1832-3, at Wheeling, and traveled with him over the mountains by stage coach from there to Washington, where, as the conqueror, the summer before, at the battle of Bad Axe, of Black Hawk—then the renowned Indian warrior of the northwest—he was received by the highest authority as a hero. A few months later a regiment of U. S. dragoons—of which there had been none in the service since the close of the war of 1812—was provided for by act of Congress, and he made the Colonel of it—to keep the Indians of the entire northwest in order. This he did effectually, scaring the Indians with his dashing, daring, admirably disciplined and excellently officered regiment, to the foot of the Rocky mountains—the savages standing in great awe of it—and of him! The very name of Dodge, after Black Hawk's disastrous defeat, became a terror to them, and his personal appearance, and very striking military carriage—he being then in the prime and vigor of manhood—contributed largely to that feeling. In the two or three years after the battle of Bad Axe, including Dodge's command of, and presence with, our First Regiment of Dragoons, there were less "Indian



troubles" — indeed they were hardly ever heard of — than there have been in any ninety days since. Thus unscrupulous Indian traders and frontier desperadoes, no less than the Indians themselves, had a healthy dread of him; for they knew that he thoroughly understood and appreciated their villainies [sic]; and, with a Jacksonian will would punish them when necessary, if they attempted to cross his path while in the performance of his duties. . . .

So much for will, united to high character, in an officer employed against Indians and ruffians upon the frontier. Swagger and bragging, with much balderdash through the public press, may answer the purpose of making false reputations and amusing a credulous public, but it takes something more than that to impress the savages with the dread of a military commander acting against them — such as they felt with regard to H. Dodge! Like Jackson and Clay and Benton, cast in the Roman mould, he seemed to have been "born to command" — and to be obeyed. Add to this, that he was a man of the purest integrity, whose palms no filthy lucre ever polluted, nor mere selfish, vulgar aims ever swayed, and you have a character whose like I do not expect ever to look upon again — one of those remarkable men, brought prominently into public life by the peculiar state of things existing in the early settlement of the West, and who, it would seem, could not have been done without. The class of which he was one — very few in number — uniting to great practical good sense and chivalric daring the best characteristics of the ancient Romans — seems indeed to have passed away; and Wisconsin and Iowa should honor the memory of their greatest citizens as Rome honored that of her Cato.

In June, 1838, a law was passed by Congress creating a new territory — cut off from Wisconsin — and named Iowa, of which Robert Lucas of Ohio was appointed Governor. Two months later I went to Burlington, to make my future home there, and found Governor Lucas already at his post and in the performance of his duties. There were but about a dozen, I think, organized counties in the new Territory, a tier of them lying along the Mississippi as far north as Dubuque, and another back of and adjoining it — the aggregate of their sparse population numbering but 23,000 souls! All of the country west and north of Van Buren and Henry counties to the Missouri river was open, uninhabited prairie. The now handsome city of Des Moines, the capital of the State, was then "Raccoon Forks" — occupied by the Indians; or, perhaps, there was a military post there still.

Gov. Lucas ordered an election, calling the first Legislature to assemble at Burlington, where it met accordingly the following Autumn.

I had been appointed by the President, Receiver of the Land Office at Burlington, with, for my colleague, as Register, Augustus C. Dodge, son to him of whom I have spoken above, "the worthy son of a noble sire" — every inch, as I soon learned thoroughly to know him, "a chip of the old block." Five or six years his senior, I had never seen him till he came down from Wisconsin to join me, bringing along with him a letter of introduction to me from his good father, in which the latter put him, as it were, under my tuition. How the pupil has since outstripped the tutor! Member of Congress; U. S. Senator; Minister to Spain — all high and honorable offices, and all honorably filled. He is now Mayor of the town where he has so long lived, and is so well known, elected by his fellow citizens, regardless of the party differences between them; a good deal higher honor, in fact, as it seems to me, than the other above named. Those were bestowed by party, *this* by THE PEOPLE — a spontaneous expression of their respect for and confidence in him, and as creditable to themselves as it is to him.

On the 1st of October, 1838, my colleague and I opened the Land Office; and, on that day, I received the money and issued my receipt for, I believe, the first acre of land ever sold in Iowa — this under the Pre-emption law then existing. On the 19th of November we opened the office for a public land sale, by auction, that had been ordered by the President, and when it was concluded, I had received over a third of a million dollars, mostly in silver. On taking this specie to St. Louis — its weight was more than seven tons — ten drays had to be hired to haul it up from the levee to the government depository — the Bank of the State of Missouri; and, but a single teller being furnished to me by the Bank to count the money, I was detained there nearly three weeks on that business. I made subsequent deposits not much less in amount than that above named, and quite a number ranging from, say 20,000 to 60,000 dollars — running through the three years that I was Receiver at Burlington.

Among the earliest purchasers of lands there at the Public Sales in 1838 and 1839, and to whom my receipts were given, as their temporary titles, was my old friend Timothy Day, of Van Buren county, to become, not long after, the great farmer of Southern Iowa, whose splendid cattle have received many of the first premiums at your Fairs — and been to their

owner a source of wealth; Timothy Fox and others of the pioneer township, in enterprise and thrift, of Denmark, in Lee county; Mr. Avery — that, I think, was the name — who planted extensive orchards in Des Moines, near Burlington, whose apples, a few years later, commanded premiums in Chicago and Cincinnati, and made for him a fortune; and the ever industrious and frugal "Friends" around Salem in Henry county — the seeds from apples gathered from trees raised there, by them, being taken to Oregon in 1846, were the origin of the great apple crops grown there: and, when the marvelous golden developments took place in California, in 1850-51 and '52, the Oregon apples being shipped to the new city of San Francisco — just sprung into existence upon the ruins of the miserable old Spanish village of Yerba Buena — were sold at prices which, if mentioned now, would be pronounced incredible.

Such again are some of the channels and some of the means through which our new States — Iowa, Oregon and California — have, within a third of a century, attained their present prosperous condition.

In 1840, when the healthy growth of Iowa had not yet commenced, much of the flour and bacon needed by her people was bought in St. Louis and brought up the river to the towns upon its banks. The supplies for my own family were thus procured — the wheat, corn, and pork raised in the Territory being, as yet, inadequate to support the population. There were but few cattle, and those of the commonest breeds; the swine long-nosed, long-legged, and — with the animals between him and the sun — that one could "look through" as he saw them along the roads — mostly of the "alligator" type; while there was probably not a horse in the Territory that could have been sold for a hundred dollars. Now, as I have seen it stated in the public prints, Iowa has, within a few years past, been one year the greatest corn-producing, and another year the greatest wheat-growing State in the Union — while her horses, her cattle and her swine carry off first-class premiums at the annual great Fairs at St. Louis — the greatest in the world.

But, to return to the meeting of the first Territorial Legislature, at Burlington, in November or December, 1838. The body consisted of thirteen members of the Council and twenty-six in the House — thus limited by the laws of Congress. Among the latter was James W. Grimes, then a young lawyer, unmarried, and just starting out in public life — destined in after years to make his mark and leave the impress of his character upon the State. Well educated, intelligent, of a fine order of abilities, and of



unimpeachable personal integrity, he became the founder and organizer of the Whig party in Iowa; afterwards — when the time came enabling them to confer the honor — her Governor, one to which his great services to his party justly entitled him; and then U. S. Senator, in which position, as chairman of the important Committee on Naval Affairs — especially so through a great war — he soon achieved a high reputation for the able manner in which he discharged its duties. When Mr. Grimes had become Governor of Iowa, he expressed to me, in a conversation between us, a desire to sink, as far as possible in the public position that he held, the partizan in the statesman. How far he succeeded in this his public acts have shown. One thing I am sure may safely be said of him, despite prejudiced attacks from either political foes or friends(?) — no corrupting Credit Mobilier fund, or that from any other source, ever swayed him in his course, from the line of what he believed it to be strictly his duty to pursue; that he died an honor to his State, and one whose example, if it had been followed by more of the Governors and Senators — mostly far his inferior in ability as well as integrity — than it has been, would have left less to be deplored than is now the case, from the effects of the deadly poison of mercenary influences. . . .

The President of the Council of Thirteen of the first Legislature of Iowa was Jesse B. Brown, better known as “Capt. Brown,” from having commanded a company of dragoons in Col. Dodge’s famous regiment. A man of respectable abilities, with a good deal of shrewdness, or cunning, and of a striking personal presence — he stood six feet and five or six inches in his shoes, with a sort of “put on” military air — the opportunity was his to have made himself among the most influential and useful of her citizens; but he threw it recklessly away — becoming that miserable creature, a drunken rowdy! The following anecdote illustrates his character in that respect: he yielded to the pernicious and disgusting vice till it became his ruin, and that of his family. I had never seen the man till he took his seat in the Council and became its President. Well dressed, and favored by nature in his personal appearance, as already stated, he presided over the body with dignity — and this continued till the end of the session. Before it closed a law was passed providing for the organization of the militia of the territory. Unasked, on my part, the Governor made me Adjutant General — because I suppose, of my West Point military education — and thus the head of his military family. In that capacity I was naturally consulted



as to other important military appointments; the most so of any of them being that of Major General of the First Division, with higher rank than my own, which was only that of a brigadier. The Governor, being a zealous temperance man, had resolved to appoint nobody to either a civil or military position, whose habits were not strictly temperate. I was warmly urged by personal friends, who were politically opposed to us, to endeavor to induce the Governor to appoint "Captain" Brown — a prominent Whig — to be Major General of the First Division, which — on account of his experience in arms and the urgent intercession of his friends — I did, and he received his commission. The adjournment of the Legislature soon afterwards took place; there were several strangers present in the small village; gentlemen from the East, whom I had known there, when "Captain" — now *General* Brown, and made such chiefly at my instance — got on one of his "big drunks" never witnessed by me before (and solemnly pledged by him, to his friends, not to be renewed) — and, in shirt sleeves, with his coat and hat thrown off, roamed the streets of Burlington like a mad Buffalo bull on the prairies, bellowing, in his stentorian voice, whatever Indian names, or words, came uppermost to his vile lips: Kic-a-poo, Kal-a-ma-zoo, Puck-a-shie, or the like — till the welkin fairly rang with it, and frightened women threw up their windows to look out, thinking that the Indians were in town! This, from the late dignified President of the Council, an ex-U. S. Army officer — and our new-appointed Major General! Need I say how shocked the good Governor was, and how disgusted and humiliated I myself felt, at the blackguard's detestable conduct? Of course it became impossible for me, ever after that, to respect "General Brown" as a soldier or a gentleman. Yet, strangely enough, his more lenient constituency sent him, subsequently, two or three times to the Territorial Legislature to represent them! Continuing, however, to fall, in both the political and the social scale, he became for a while a Justice of the Peace; the last public position, I think, held by him being that of a gatekeeper on the plank road. So much for a wasted life!

Iowa's first territorial Secretary was one Conway, who had been editor of a newspaper somewhere up in the mountains of Pennsylvania. A ready and satirical writer, with a good deal of Irish humor and snap, he was a restless aspirant for higher honors, and made no scruple of using his position to attain them; having his eye modestly but steadily fixed on the gubernatorial chair! Hardly had the Legislature met, ere it and the old Governor

"locked horns" upon the important subject of penknives and stationery — the Governor being as fixed in his notions with regard to economy as he was upon temperance. This was Conway's opportunity. He artfully fomented the quarrel, and it became . . . a highly amusing triangular duel, the Governor blazing away, in his messages, at the Legislature, the Legislature at Conway, provider of the penknives, &c., and Conway, in turn, at the Governor, over the shoulders of the Legislature.

Finally, the warfare became so hot that the Legislature memorialized the President to remove the Governor from office — just what Conway had been working for. There was no actual justification or necessity, as regarded the interests of the territory, for any such action — and of course it was not taken. The messages, resolutions, and correspondence, between the parties in dispute, in that momentous and dignified proceeding, still, I dare say, exist among the "State papers" at Des Moines, and will furnish materials for a rich chapter to the future historian of Iowa. Conway died, within a year after the scenes mentioned, and James Clark, a sterling gentleman of excellent abilities and unexceptionable character, was appointed to succeed him. He was afterwards, in 1845, Governor of the territory, discharged its duties with exemplary fidelity and entire satisfaction to its people, and died in 1851, respected and honored by them.

In the autumn of 1839 and the winter of 1839-40 occurred a stirring and remarkable episode in the history of Iowa, known as the "Missouri War." A question existed as to the true boundary line between Missouri and Iowa, and the usual difficulties arose in regard to the collection of taxes within the disputed territory. The Governors of the State and Territory — Boggs of Missouri, and Lucas of Iowa — honest and patriotic men, but neither of them endowed with the true intelligence and the calm prudence and judgment that men occupying such responsible positions ought to possess — on the contrary, both "peppery" to the last degree — after having hurled their anathemas at each other in the shape of proclamations, were "spoiling for a fight." Was Boggs, of the great State of Missouri, going to yield an inch to the young upstart, Iowa, just born into existence? Not a bit of it! She "wasn't anybody," and he'd teach her a lesson! On the other hand, hadn't Lucas been Governor of Ohio, a greater State than Missouri? hadn't he had there a similar "war" with Michigan about a boundary question, in which he had brought *her* to terms? Of course he had; and didn't he, therefore, "know all about it?" Certainly he did. What was he to do,

therefore, but laugh to scorn, and put at defiance the impudent pretensions of the arrogant Missourian! Thus, with bristles up, they stood in hostile array. Boggs ordered out his legions, and word came to Iowa that, under command of Gen. "Horse Allen," a mighty warrior, who had been in great battles in Texas, they were marching up to the disputed territory. I, under specific orders from Gov. Lucas, addressed to me in my official capacity as Adjutant General, visited the prospective scene of war, south of the Des Moines, with no instructions to endeavor to negotiate for peace, but simply to reconnoitre and ascertain "the situation." This I did, making to his Excellency my official report, under date of November 4th, 1839, in print, and now before me — no enemy having yet appeared near our border.

Soon thereafter quiet Mr. Gregory, the Sheriff of Clark county, Missouri, went up "civilly" — no military force along with him — into the southern tier of townships of Van Buren county, to collect taxes; whereupon the people of Van Buren, to protect their rights, pounced upon poor Gregory, carried him a hundred miles or more north into Iowa, and clapped him into the Bloomington (now Muscatine) jail, "for safe keeping."

This brought on the crisis! Boggs' troops marched up to the vicinity of Waterloo [Missouri] — ominous name! — ours, being ordered out, marched down to meet them, and a collision seemed inevitable. Fortunately, however, a joint civil commission was suggested, to endeavor to settle the very threatening difficulty. A truce was proclaimed to allow this to be done. The commission met and proposed a submission of the matter to the U. S. Supreme Court. This was finally agreed to by the belligerent Governors, when the troops upon both sides were withdrawn from the field — and thus ended the "Missouri War." A year later the Supreme Court decided the case in favor of Iowa, thus securing to her the south half of Van Buren, and of all the counties subsequently organized west of it, to the Missouri river, which under a different decision, would have become a part of the State of Missouri — so that young Iowa's pluck, after all, did not go for nothing. After this first serious trouble in the history of Iowa, quiet reigned within her borders for six or seven years, but not without hard times along through 1842 and 1843. The price of wheat fell down to 25 cents per bushel, and pork to \$1.50 per hundred — many farmers finding difficulty to raise money enough wherewith to pay their taxes. In 1846-7 came another epoch — the steps successfully adopted to bring Iowa into the Union as a State; from whence her prosperity and importance may be said to have taken its date,



though not till several years later, when railroads, the magical developers of the resources of the country — came to her borders, did she begin to move ahead with giant strides.

As one of a small party of U. S. topographical engineers in Government employ, during the Summers and Autumns of 1832 and 1833, to explore a route for a railroad through the then dense wilderness of Northwestern Ohio, from Sandusky City on Lake Erie, down to Dayton — *the first enterprise of its kind ever projected in the Valley of the Mississippi* — I had become much interested in such works, and sought earnestly, by speech and writing, to awaken in the public mind of the people of Iowa a like interest upon the subject. But the effort was too early — and remained for a long time labor lost. That [effort] to help in procuring a State government with saving provisions in its Constitution to guard against ruinous indebtedness, and iniquitous legislation under it, met with better success. Indiana, where I had lived some years, had “gone through the mill” in that respect; and Illinois had been “like unto her”; each of them having, in 1836, launched out wildly into grand systems of “Internal Improvements” — railroads and canals — and created thereby a State indebtedness for each, amounting to some five or six millions of dollars; yet for which neither of them had much of anything to show — except seemingly interminable and unbearable taxation for the people. The money had been unwisely squandered — but the grinding debt remained! Hence the provision, in the Constitution of Iowa, against the creation of a State debt beyond, I think, \$200,000 [*sic*. Actually, \$100,000 in the 1846 Constitution; \$250,000 in the 1857 Constitution], with such restrictions as to prevent its being done; and she stands to-day, I believe, with, so to speak, merely a nominal debt — in what contrast to the condition of some of her sisters!

Another clause embraced in the constitution of Iowa forbade the passage of special acts of incorporation by the Legislature — a never-ending source of rascality — but providing, through general laws, for all that was necessary and proper to be done under them. This proposition, especially, met with violent partizan opposition from some quarters. Without state indebtedness, and without special acts of incorporation, said those who were in favor of them, no colleges and public schools and churches can be established, no railroads built, nor, in short, anything done as it should be done in the development of the resources of the new state. The propositions, therefore, to prohibit them met, I say, with much opposition in some locali-



ties — being stigmatized as “demagogical!” How far they were so or how far they became sheet anchors in the constitution of Iowa, securing the future prosperity of the state, subsequent events have shown. She has now a million and a quarter of inhabitants; railroads, to three or four thousand miles in extent, cross her territory latitudinally, longitudinally and diagonally; beautiful towns and villages everywhere dot her plains, with churches and school houses and colleges that are an honor to them; the whistle of the steam car, and the sweet and soothing tones of the church-going bell, are everywhere heard; and where else, on all the earth, is there a population enjoying these great blessings, that is less lightly taxed, or more prosperous and happy? The state — purely an agricultural one, with no large cities to swell its population — as Mr. Jefferson truly termed them, “sores upon the body politic” — like those of her immediate neighbors, St. Louis in Missouri, and Chicago, especially, in Illinois, or even Milwaukee, in Wisconsin, now large manufacturing centers — so much less desirable than agricultural pursuits, where the pure air of heaven is not withheld, nor the free use of the limbs restrained — Iowa, I assert, stands today a State unsurpassed in everything that goes to make a free, a prosperous, and a happy people, by any in the world! and her growth, in but little over a third of a century — only twenty-seven years since she became a State — is one of the marvels of the age.

I have alluded above to the many churches in Iowa. Not a member of any of them, I took, nevertheless, much interest in the Episcopal denomination, it being the one in which she who was most dear to me had been christened, married, communed for long, long years — and finally died. Feeling, therefore, as she did, a deep interest in it, I also felt such an interest on her account and gave to it the aid and support that it was in my power to give. The growth and prosperity of that church in Iowa, like that of the State itself, has been remarkable. It was in 1850 that a few ladies — not a dozen in number — formed themselves into a society in Keokuk, to set on foot an effort to build an Episcopal church there — a Vestry being elected with the same view. Of this body — I being of the number — not one was a church member; there being none such there, at that time, to act in that capacity. There were no funds with which to build a church — and no lot on which to build one. Soon, two lots were given for that purpose by a zealous Episcopalian of St. Louis, who owned property in Keokuk; being those where St. John’s Church now stands. . . .

The nine or ten ladies of the church in Keokuk, having effected their organization, began at once to work, through their Sewing Society and their Fairs, and at the end of a year or two — in 1851-2 — with such other aid as was given, a small frame building was put up — since enlarged to what it now is. Rev. Otis Hackett had come with a letter of introduction to me from Bishop Kemper in Wisconsin, and we employed him to preach for us. About this time, assisted by my fellow vestrymen and a few others, I raised money enough to build a plain board fence around the lots, and to get trees to plant out on the two sides where the streets ran. These jobs I superintended in person, setting out the trees with my own hands. A drought, the subsequent summer, killed all but one of them, an elm, whose graceful arms — so a friend writes me — now reaching heavenwards, form an object of attraction to passers by; and being in close proximity to the parsonage — erected long since — and the church make, as he kindly expresses it, my “Monument” — a memento to my poor efforts for the church, when in the earlier dawn and struggle of its existence. I gratefully accept the compliment so handsomely bestowed.

In 1855 a bell was bought for the church, and — being still in the vestry, then as senior warden — I wrote to the founders, sending to them the money from the congregation to pay for it. Thus it happened that it came with my name painted upon it; and thus it still hangs, I suppose, in the tower of the church. . . .

On the 27th of May, 1855, the clear, sweet tones of the bell of St. John's Church, Keokuk, rang out of a calm Sunday morning upon the pure air, being heard all over the town; and that was the first bell ever heard from an Episcopal Church in Iowa — not yet twenty years ago. What source of true pleasure it is, as life draws near its close, to be able thus to revert to the earliest steps taken to establish the institutions — religious as well as political — and thus to have helped lay the foundations of what is now a great state. . . .

The growth, through its earliest years, of the Episcopal Church in Iowa, was slow. In 1853, it was doubted whether there were six *regularly organized* parishes — the number necessary, under the laws of the church, to organize a diocese. Six presbyters, or rectors, however, of the church, desirous of seeing this brought about, called upon the venerable Provisional Bishop (Kemper) in June, 1853, in a communication over their signatures, asking him to convene a meeting of “the clergy and vestries in the State,”

with a view to a "diocesan organization," which he did accordingly, requesting them to meet him at Muscatine. There was a prevailing impression among them that the good Bishop entertained "High Church" proclivities and desired, by delay and the introduction in Iowa of a sufficient number of clergymen holding sentiments like his own, to give to the Diocese, when created, that character — though but little was then yet said, publicly, upon that subject.

I was written to, however, about it, from several sources, and somewhat warmly urged to help defeat such a project. Liking very much, personally, the Provisional Bishop — who was a most kind and excellent man, a true Christian gentleman — I reluctantly acted against him. However, [I was] ready to help build up and sustain, with whatever influence and power I might have in the matter, the American Episcopal Church, as I understood its principles. "High Church" ideas and practices were repulsive to me. We had, at the time, no clergyman at Keokuk; and upon the action and request of the vestry, I went up alone, as a lay delegate, to represent St. John's parish at the meeting in Muscatine. There I met Bishop Kemper and the six Presbyters, with lay delegates from the other parishes. The question of the existence of the six parishes necessary to justify such a proceeding having been discussed, we went into an organization of the Diocese of Iowa — so far as that convention could do it. A few months later the General Convention, assembled in New York, confirmed our action — and thus Iowa became a Diocese. In the following year (May 31, 1854) seven clergymen, with lay delegates from the parishes — then numbering eight or nine — again met; this time at Davenport, to elect a Bishop; the venerable Provisional Bishop being again present and presiding. We elected Dr. Wm. Henry Lee of Rochester, New York, by a vote of 5 to 1 of the Clergy — all there who were entitled to vote — and 5 to 4 of parishes (Laity). Many obstacles were sought to be thrown in the way of the election, by motions to "lay on the table," to "indefinitely postpone," to "reconsider," and finally by a formal, written "Protest" signed by the one non-concurring clergyman and four dissenting lay delegates — but all without avail. Dr. Lee was declared duly elected and became Bishop of Iowa — which he has been ever since. With a wealthy congregation and an elegant church in Rochester, New York, at the time of his election, he naturally felt some reluctance to separate himself from them, to assume even a Bishop's robes in a wild, new country, with but six duly organized, poor parishes in it!



On my way to my old home in New York, upon a visit, I went from the Convention at Davenport, to Rochester, to inform the new Bishop of his election, and to seek to persuade him to come among us — using all the arguments at my command to do so — which he soon thereafter did. This was in the Summer of 1854 — but just twenty years ago — and behold, now, the great Diocese of Iowa, with perhaps well on towards an hundred parishes, and its fine college at Davenport — the new beautiful city where the excellent Bishop — whose labors have been so eminently successful — makes his home. Thus have both the State and Church in Iowa — free from all “’tangling alliances,” or influences, of the one with, or over, the other — flourished side by side. . . .

For several years more peace and prosperity reigned in Iowa, ’till 1861, when came the great war of the Rebellion. To me, before it began, the very thought of such a conflict as must ensue, if once commenced, between people of the same race and language, and who had so long lived happily together, made the same government and laws, was one dreadful to contemplate; and I would most gladly have seen any compromise or agreement made, that could have been made with honor, to avoid it. But when it was wholly unavoidable; when it actually came; when armies were arrayed against each other in the field; nay, when the collision had taken place in a great battle, and the capital of the nation came well nigh falling into the hands of those who sought the destruction of the Union — the Federal forces in front of Washington having been repulsed and driven back upon it — calm thought and reason said to me: there is but one course left to me — a citizen of the north, and educated at the National Military School of my country — and that is, though at an age nine or ten years beyond that requiring military service from me, to tender my services, however little they may be worth — to help save the Union. This I accordingly did and was commissioned by the President a staff officer, with rank in the regular army. Assigned to duty in the Department of Kansas, I reported there to its Commander General Blunt, and was by him at once made Inspector General on his staff — thus to help organize the army which he had just commenced gathering at Fort Leavenworth, for the field. Later, when one general who had ranked him, afflicted by dissolute habits — and since dismissed the service — disappeared from the field in the very crisis of the campaign; and another troubled — as quaint Mr. Lincoln happily characterized the failing — with “the slows,” did not “come to time,” the



command of the "Army of the Frontier" thereby devolved upon Blunt; and it was never, thereafter, I believe, accused of "slowness," by either friend or foe! Becoming, by my position, its Inspector General, I rode side by side (literally) by day and by night with the brave and intrepid Blunt, through all of his vigorous and memorable campaign in southwestern Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian country, in the autumn of 1862, and speak, therefore, from actual personal observation of what I myself saw and know of the action of that army. And it is of some of the Iowa troops — all behaved well! — who formed part and parcel of it, that I now write, to pay to them the tribute that they deserve, for their admirable endurance, as soldiers, and their splendid bearing upon the field of battle. Night marches, to surprise and attack at daybreak — a favorite mode of warfare with Blunt — and hard fighting seemed to be as familiar to them (and so with all the troops of the command — composed of regiments from Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana) — as if they had been the veterans of twenty campaigns! This was a new feature in war, for even Washington — as may be seen by Irving's history — did not, in the early part of the war of the Revolution, place as much reliance upon raw volunteers, in trying emergencies, as he did upon regular troops; and General Scott is upon record for saying that it would take five years to make the former equal to the latter. Yet, notwithstanding this very high authority, experience certainly did not sustain it, with the troops of the Northwestern States in the Army of the Frontier; for none ever made more rapid and harder marches, as history records them, or fought more bravely, after they were made. No disaster, of the slightest degree, ever marred the triumphant march of the Army of the Frontier, from the time it took the field, on the first of October, till it left it, the last of December — a brief campaign, but as brilliant and successful a one as any that the war produced. Whenever it struck the foe (and the blows fell fast and thick — at old Fort Wayne, Cane Hill, Prairie Grove and other less noted fields), victory crowned its efforts. The bloody battle of Prairie Grove was the final and decisive one. There Hindman's vaunted army, which, aided by half a dozen able Brigadiers — three West Point graduates among them — which they had been all Summer organizing for the field — was defeated, driven south of the Arkansas, and broken into fragments — never to be reorganized. It is of that battle, therefore — of which few, if any, during the war, were more obstinately contested — that I wish to say a few words here. Three days after it was fought,

to-wit, on December 7th, 1862, I wrote an account of it, which — in print, and become of historic record, is now before me. From it I make the following brief extracts:

Not less than thirty-five thousand men and seventy pieces of cannon were engaged in this hard fought battle, which commenced early in the day, and was only terminated by the coming on of night, under whose folds the enemy, muffling the wheels of his artillery guns — to drown their noise, and thus the better to conceal his movements — effected his retreat. . . .

The booming of cannon, from seventy pieces at the same time, was indeed a "thunder of artillery" that was most sublime.

But the musketry fire, also, where the enemy's "Infantry force" (greatly superior in point of numbers) "met ours face to face, for hour after hour, in a most deadly conflict, was one incessant roar — like the rattling of thunder in a terrible storm; the bellowing of the cannon, even, being drowned by it, to those who were nearer to the former than the latter."

"On the morning after the battle, in quite a small orchard" (about the size of one of the squares in Keokuk) "by the side of a house, over forty of our dead, and some sixty of the enemy" were counted by me; and I might have added: bloody and ghastly from their wounds, and with contorted faces, limbs and bodies, writhed, by the agonies of death, into shapes shocking to behold — always one of the sad fruits of battle — while "all around the orchard, as far as the eye could reach, dead bodies were to be seen. The open woods, indeed, were strewn with them, for the distance of two and a half miles one way, by one and a half the other."

It was through and around the little orchard above mentioned that some of the Wisconsin, Iowa and other troops — the 19th and 20th Iowa Infantry being of the number — charged up a hill and into the woods, by which the enemy was covered, in the face of his batteries as well as his heavy infantry fire, and were terribly cut to pieces. It was there that the gallant Lieutenant Colonel McFarland, while leading his brave Nineteenth Iowa Regiment, fell among the killed, while "one hundred and ninety of his men were killed and wounded" — as reported on the morning after the battle. Of the Division to which they belonged, "some thirty of the line officers" were reported wounded — among them Major Thompson of the Twentieth Iowa. The estimate of the dead and wounded of the enemy was placed at from 2,500 to 3,000, while that of our own reached probably a thousand.

This shows hard fighting, and a desperately contested struggle, such as does not very often occur. The enemy west of the Mississippi, with an army well organized and admirably officered — Marmaduke, Frost, Shoup (formerly regular U. S. Army officers), Fagan, Roane and Stern — the latter killed in the battle — all being Brigadiers under Hindman's command. Three days before the battle, Hindman had said, in a printed address to his troops — he carried a small press with him for the printing of such addresses — the one referred to, dated December 4, 1862, is now before me: "WE MUST CONQUER OR OUR COUNTRY IS RUINED." That he relied upon an easy victory — underrating the foe he was to meet — there can be no doubt, from the whole tone of his vaunting address; a reliance, however, as the result soon proved, to be turned into one of bitter disappointment and mortification.

Having known, personally, many of the Iowa troops who helped so materially to achieve this victory — sons, in numerous instances, of the thrifty farmers there to whom I had sold their lands twenty years before, I naturally felt a warm interest in them — and proud of their brave deeds! The gallant hero, Col. McFarland, I knew well, having, in 1856, presided with him jointly at a mass meeting of the two political parties in Iowa, when Buchanan and Fremont were opposing candidates for the Presidency. Are his remains, and those of his brave comrades who fell around him at Prairie Grove, permitted to lie there unhonored? I hope not. Just tribute to the memory of those who sacrifice their lives in the defense of their country are great incentives to others to follow their example, when called upon to do so. The great historian Macaulay has said: "A people which takes no pride in the noble achievements of its remote ancestors, will never do anything worthy of being remembered with pride by remote descendants," and this saying of Macaulay undoubtedly is true. Let Iowa look to it, therefore, that the deeds of her brave sons, who fell at Prairie Grove, in the Regiments bearing *her* name, be properly commemorated, not only to the present generation, but to those to come; so that their "remote descendants will take pride in, and honor their noble achievements!" And let this be done without unmanly insult to those they met to battle as temporary foes; but who with, thank God, a Union saved, are once more living as citizens of the same Government, under its Constitution and laws, and destined thus to make it, sooner or later, through the intelligence and deep-down sense of justice of the people of all sections — instead of the wretched spectacle of not merely a "divided Union," but broken, soon, perhaps into



half a dozen sets of States, constantly arrayed against each other — to become, to-day, the most powerful, the greatest, the best, and the most respected of any that the world has ever seen! — so that the very humblest of those living under it, may exclaim, with pride, wherever he may chance to be: "I AM AN AMERICAN CITIZEN!"

Soon after the close of the campaign of the Army of the Frontier, in the Autumn of 1862 and the Winter of 1862-3, a calamity befel me, placing me *hors de combat*, unfitting me for further service in the field. A badly broken limb, crippling me for life, put it out [of] my power ever again to mount a horse; and leaving me able, only, to perform other less active duties, such as inspections, with those of boards of survey, and courts martial and military commissions — upon the two latter of which, I may here mention, I sat for fifteen months, upon "all sorts of cases."

The war ended, and a reorganization taking place in 1866, under a new law, greatly reducing the army — to the mere nucleus, as it were, from which it had sprung — I accepted in it, like so many others, a position with rank much reduced below that previously held and earned in the field; but the latter secured to me, by the law, to be entered in the official "Army Register," annually published — as continues to be done. This may be regarded by some an "empty honor." Not so, however, by soldiers, who esteem it an acknowledgment by the government of services rendered.

In the performance of the duties of the new position, I went, of course, in obedience to military law, wherever "ordered" — three years in Texas — and was thus absent from Iowa, except a few brief visits to my family. In 1868 the latter joined me, thus making their actual residence and mine in Iowa thirty years — from 1838 till 1868. But, I still claim it as my home, with the rights of citizenship, which I should unwillingly surrender, having been so long identified with it; and feeling — if I may be permitted so to speak, without subjecting myself to being charged with undue pretension — as if I had become part and parcel of it; having taken part in so many of the important steps in its growth, from its very infancy — whether for good or evil, others will judge. . . .

I have thus written a long letter, five-fold longer than it was meant to be, when I commenced it; and so long, I am apprehensive, as to prevent its being read. But, if it is read with any pleasure by my contemporaries in Iowa



of a third of a century ago — now become the “Old Settlers,” and whose ranks death has sadly thinned — or, if it proves a source of satisfactory information to more recent comers, I shall feel compensated for having written it.

Tinged, it may be thought to be, by some, with egotism. But, it would be impossible for me to describe the events of which I have written — and with most of which I was so closely identified — without some allusion to my personal participation in them.

I am Sir, Very respectfully,

Your ob't servant,

V. P. VAN ANTWERP.

## HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES

### *State Historical Society of Iowa*

During the months of June, July, and August, 144 new members were added to the Society's rolls. In addition, the following 23 members became Life Members:

#### *Cedar Rapids*

C. J. Lynch, Jr.

#### *Centerville*

J. M. Beck

#### *Clinton*

Ben F. Martinsen

#### *Davenport*

Miss Elsie J. Dow

Harold F. Thuenen

#### *Des Moines*

A. H. Pickford

W. Z. Proctor

#### *Estherville*

Deemer Lee

#### *Glidden*

William R. Ferguson

#### *Grinnell*

Frederick L. Baumann

#### *Iowa City*

David Boot

LeRoy S. Mercer

#### *Keota*

Mrs. H. W. Statler

#### *Marengo*

Mrs. Glenn A. Ellis

#### *Monroe*

Raymond J. Hekel

#### *Mount Vernon*

E. C. Bergmann

#### *Oskaloosa*

H. S. Life

#### *Pella*

H. E. Wormhoudt

#### *California*

Lowell Blanchard, Los Angeles

Herbert B. Smith, Claremont

#### *Illinois*

J. S. Broeksmit, Lake Forest

#### *New York*

MacKinlay Kantor, New York

City

Dr. Robert McGrath, New York

City

William J. Petersen, superintendent of the Society, traveled out to California to address the famous Iowa Picnic at Long Beach on August 14. This was the forty-ninth annual picnic, which is staged by the Iowa Association of Long Beach and Southern California.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S CALENDAR

July 22	Addressed 4-H Club at Boone, Iowa
August 10	Attended Herbert Hoover Birthday Celebration, West Branch
August 14	Addressed Iowa Picnic, Long Beach, California
September 1	Attended State Day, Iowa State Fair, Des Moines
September 9-10	Attended annual meeting of American Society for State and Local History, Madison, Wisconsin

*Iowa Historical Activities*

The members of the McGregor Historical Society have been most active this summer. On July 17 and 18 a celebration was sponsored by the towns of Prairie du Chien, Marquette, and McGregor in commemoration of the removal of the tolls on the Mississippi bridge, and the McGregor Society held open house at their Museum. The Society also participated in the festivities when a marker was erected at the spot where Alexander McGregor established a ferry from Prairie du Chien in 1836. Mrs. Lena D. Myers, president of the Society, gave a talk on Alexander McGregor. In August, at the Clayton County Centennial Fair, members of the Society took part in a pageant depicting events in the history of the county. The Museum at McGregor has one of the best county collections in the state, and is constantly being expanded by gifts of historical relics. Most recent acquisition is a trunk of articles belonging to Gardner and Alexander McGregor.

At a meeting of the Four County Historical Society on August 6, 1954, H. Roy Mosnat read a paper on the "Soils of the Belle Plaine Area." His paper was published in the August 18 issue of the *Belle Plaine Union*.

The Marshall County Historical Society, at its meeting on August 11, heard a talk by Donald J. Berthrong, of the history department of the University of Oklahoma, on "Early Iowa Settlers and the Indians."

The Wyoming (Iowa) Historical Society held its thirtieth annual meeting on August 30. The following officers were elected: Henry Fishwild, president; Vera Paul, Elva Brodersen, Elsie Bender, and Dora Thompsen, vice-presidents; Nellie Atherton, recording secretary; Marion Steele, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Don Wherry, publicity chairman; and Ralph Orth, treasurer. Dr. C. J. Menners of Anamosa addressed the meeting on the history of early post offices and postal regulations.

At a meeting of the Guthrie County Historical Society on June 20, George W. Worley, public relations director of the Iowa State Conservation Commission, spoke on the conservation movement in Iowa. The August meeting of the Society was devoted to discussion of plans for expanding the work and the membership of the organization. Much interest was shown in the movement for a county historical museum. The Society also had a booth at the Guthrie County Fair, where a prize was offered for the oldest continuous residence on a Guthrie County farm.

Mrs. Florence Murphy is chairman of the centennial committee of the Floyd County Historical Society. The committee sponsored a display of historical relics during the county centennial in August.

In Dallas County Miss Florence Clark, secretary of the Society for the Preservation of Dallas County History, is gathering historical articles to be displayed in the show windows of Adel during the centennial there. Society members are also planning a permanent museum.

On July 21, 1954, a plaque was erected on U. S. Highway 6 west of Adair, marking the site of the Jesse James train robbery which took place on July 21, 1873. W. E. Hays, executive assistant to the president of the Rock Island Lines, helped dedicate the marker, which reads: "Site of the first train robbery in the West, committed by the notorious Jesse James and his gang of outlaws, July 21, 1873." Mr. Hays explained that the marker was not a monument to Jesse James, but rather it commemorated "the first time in history that a moving train was wrecked and robbed."

The library of the State University of Iowa has announced plans for the publication of a quarterly journal devoted to the Civil War, to be known as *Civil War History*. Clyde Walton, curator of rare books at the library, will serve as the editor. The magazine will deal with all phases of the war, will be illustrated, and will sell for \$1.50 a copy, or \$5.00 a year. The first issue will appear in January, 1955. Members of the editorial board are Bruce Catton, 1953 Pulitzer prize winner; MacKinlay Kantor; Charles T. Miller, associate professor of English at the University; Stow W. Persons, professor of history; Bell I. Wiley of Emory University, Georgia; Kenneth P. Williams of Indiana University; and Allan Nevins of Columbia University.

Centennials were held at Dixon in July; Brandon in July; Kossuth Coun-



ty, July 4-6; Walcott, June; North English, August 6-8; Clayton County Fair, August 13-16; Monona, August 23-26; Carroll County, August 22-28; Floyd County, August 15-21; Sergeant Bluff, August 19-20.

At the Ringgold County Historical Society meeting in August, Donald Dailey was re-elected president. Other officers elected were H. E. Todd, vice-president; Thelma Caryl, secretary; and Patty Beard, treasurer. Plans were discussed for the observance of the Mount Ayr centennial in 1955.

A log cabin which will serve as official headquarters for the Forest City centennial of 1955 has already been erected on the courthouse block. Odell Forslund is general chairman for the centennial.

Two centennial issues of newspapers have appeared recently. In Harrison County, in observance of the centennial, a special edition of the *Logan Herald-Observer* and the *Woodbine Twiner* was published on October 28. On June 18 a centennial edition of the *Maquoketa Jackson Sentinel* was published under the editorship of Margaret Butler.

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